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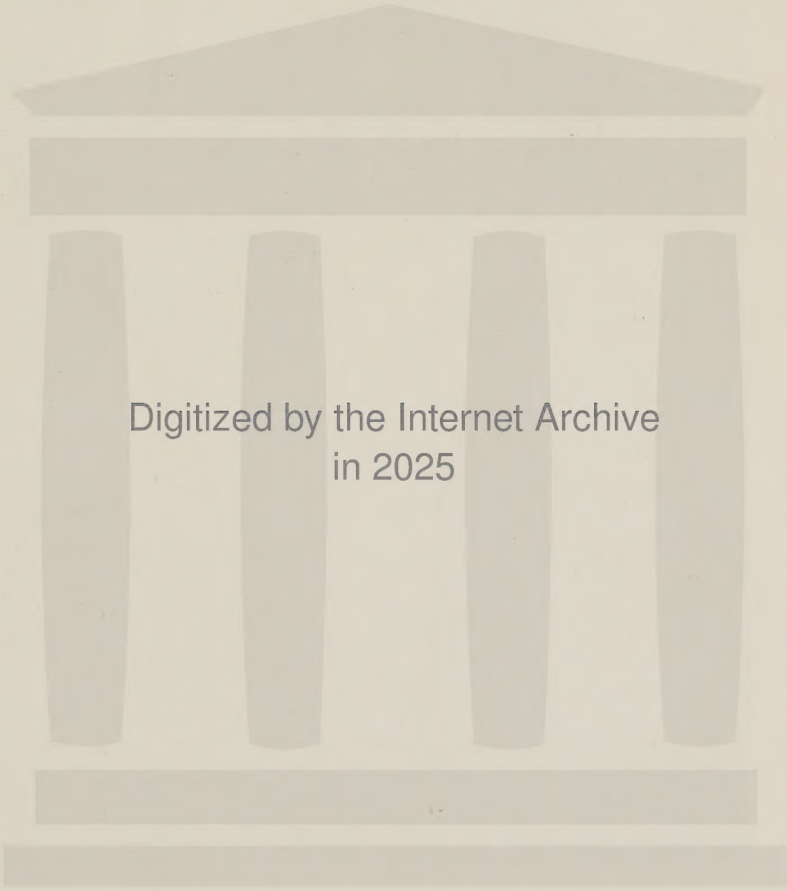

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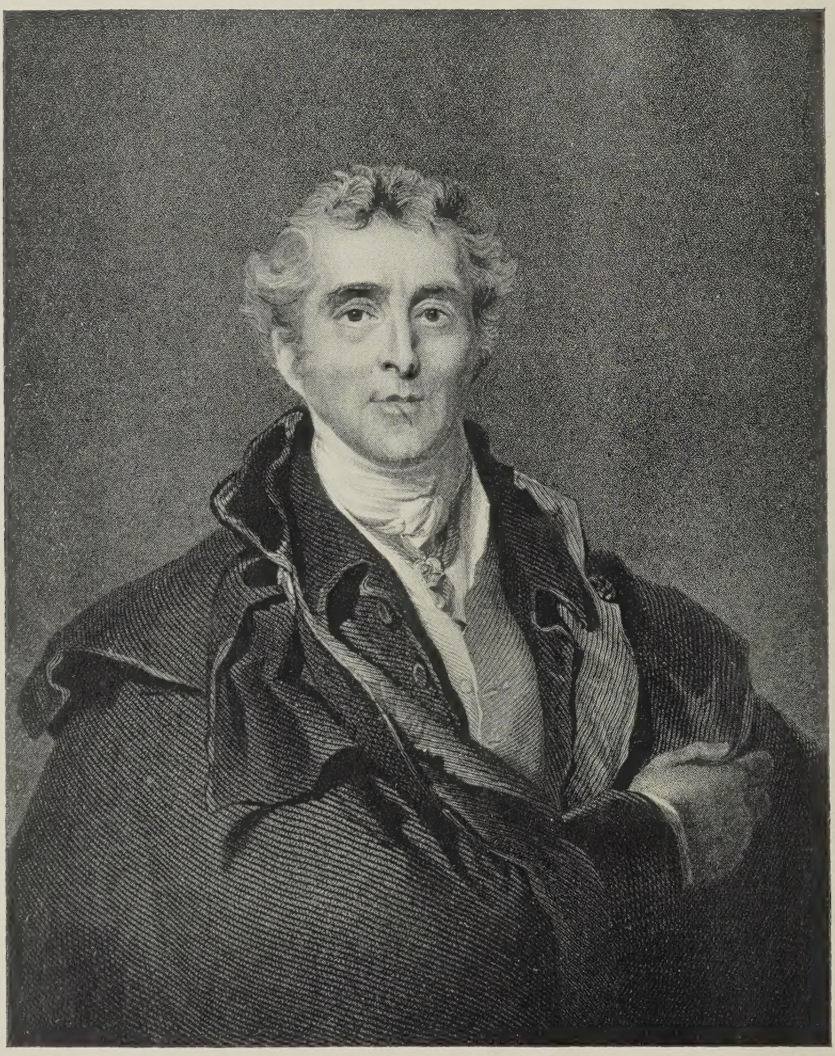

ARTHUR WELLESLEY, DUKE OF WELLINGTON.
Ambassador, 1814.

Frontispiece.

THE PARIS EMBASSY

A NARRATIVE OF FRANCO-BRITISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

1814—1920

BY

BECKLES WILLSON

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TO THE

HON. PHILIPPE ROY

PREFACE

THE author of the following pages is fully aware of the unique advantage he has enjoyed by dating his narrative from the year of the Bourbon Restoration. He has thus, while chronicling the phases and incidents of Franco-British diplomatic relations throughout a century, also been enabled to tell the story of a single house and its successive occupants from its acquisition to the present day.

Before this period British embassies in Paris were fugitive. From the establishment of the first resident in Elizabeth's reign ambassadors had no fixed abode. This may have had its conveniences, as when, in times of disturbance, they wished to escape the easy violence of the mob; but it also had its manifest drawbacks. Suitable accommodation for the emissary of his sovereign "sent to lie abroad for his country" was not always easy to procure and occasionally the French King was besought to intervene, especially in the case of a nobleman of high rank and wealth who aspired to a luxurious mansion near the Court.

In the reign of Henri IV the English ambassadors occupied the Hôtel de la Tremoïlle in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré—not, however, the street which now bears that name and in which the present Embassy stands, but that part of the existing Rue St. Honoré lying outside the Porte St. Honoré in the wall of Charles V.[1] This Hôtel de la Tremoïlle (later Hôtel de

[1] The gate stood close to the present Théâtre Français.

Joyeuse and Hôtel du Bouchange) was bequeathed by Henri de Bouchange to the Minims of the French Province and by them leased to the English Ambassador. There were various migrations during the seventeenth century, and one Ambassador is found living in the neighbourhood of the Temple. I have not succeeded in tracing all the Embassy quarters even of the succeeding century. His Excellency the Marquess of Crewe reminds me that when Horatio Walpole (uncle of Horace) was Ambassador he lived for some years at the fine house which is now the Ministry of Agriculture—the Hôtel de Villeroy. Previously he had dwelt in the Rue de Grenelle; moving to the Hôtel de Villeroy in 1727, he occupied it for eight years.

Lord Harcourt, when Ambassador in 1769, lived at the Hôtel Grimberghen, Rue St. Dominique, in the Faubourg St. Germain. His successor, Lord Stormont, inhabited in 1775 a house in the Rue des Petits Champs, opposite the Rue des Bons Enfants. In 1784 the Duke of Manchester lived in the Rue du Pot de Fer, Faubourg St. Germain. Four years later we find his successor, the Duke of Dorset, dwelling in the Faubourg St. Honoré, near the Barrière du Roule. In 1792 Lord Gower established himself in the Hôtel Monaco, Rue St. Dominique, now the Austrian Embassy. Then followed, at the interval of a decade, in 1803, Lord Whitworth, who passed the brief but exciting period of his embassy in the Rue du Faubourg du Roule.

By his successor Wellington's purchase of the present building all these migrations came to an end. The Duke doubtless felt that, as Bismarck said more than half a century later, "It is not becoming, nor worthy of a great State, that its Ambassador should live in a hired house, where he would be subject to notice to quit,

and on leaving would have to remove the archives in a cart."

As to sources, I confess the vast masses of material in the Foreign Office archives were less useful in explaining a given situation or revealing an individual character than private letters, memoirs, and newspapers. Apropos of Bismarck, his views on this head are well worth quoting: they would have been shared to the full by Palmerston, Granville, and Salisbury. Remarking that Ambassadors as a rule wrote at exasperating length, but that there was often nothing in their dispatches, he went on to say:

"As for using these dispatches some day as material for history, nothing will be found of value in them. I believe the archives are open to the public at the end of thirty years—but it might be done sooner. Even the dispatches which do contain information are scarcely intelligible to those who do not know the people and their relations to each other. In thirty years' time who will know what sort of man the writer was, how he looked at things, and how his individuality affected the manner in which he presented them? One must know what Gortschakoff, or Gladstone, or Granville had in his own mind when making the statements reported in the dispatch. It is easier to find out something from the newspapers (of which, indeed, Governments also make use and in which they frequently say much more clearly what they want). But that also requires knowledge of the circumstances. The most important points, however, are always dealt with in private letters and confidential communications, also verbal ones; and these are not included in the archives." [1]

Accordingly, I have availed myself throughout of any memoirs, private correspondence, and newspapers

[1] Busch: *Bismarck*, vol. i, p. 419.

which could shed light on the Ambassadors and on diplomatic events. I am especially indebted to Lord Newton for his admirable *Life* of Lord Lyons; to Lady Betty Balfour's *Letters* of her father, Lord Lytton, and to Sir Alfred Lyall's biography of Lord Dufferin. Other numerous authorities will be found cited throughout in the footnotes.

In conclusion, my warm thanks are due for particular information to Mr. Stephen Gaselee, C.B., Librarian of the Foreign Office.

PARIS B. W.
January 1927

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CHAPTER I

PAULINE AND HER BOWER

IN 1814 the Hôtel Borghese, known amongst the frivolous as the Palais de Pauline, but more correctly referred to by the *noblesse* of the Faubourg as the Hôtel de Charost, stood, and still stands, between two other dingy and aristocratic mansions on the left as one passes westwards along the narrow and winding Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré to the Palais de l'Elysée.

For many years it had been the town house of the Princess Pauline Borghese, second sister of the Emperor Napoleon, and to this day the visitor will find preserved within its walls many intimate memorials of this illustrious and volatile lady. Her bedroom, with its sumptuous appointments—her very bed—remains as she left it. Her furniture, pictures, and tapestries—the numerous mirrors which reflected her truly exquisite person, adorn the salons and ante-rooms. Her spirit, as Lord Dufferin once agreeably informed a delegation of Nonconformist divines, permeates the place.

Since her time no fewer than fourteen British Ambassadors, in the long line of diplomatic succession, have dwelt within this building: they have slept in Pauline's resplendent bed-chamber; they have, in

moments of relaxation, often moralized on her personality and history. Is it then surprising that they should have discovered in her a charming analogue to France herself —that country whose amity they have spent laborious days and nights in cultivating? Pauline was beautiful, she was intelligent, she was capricious, she was passionate, she was vain. She had, says M. Fleischmann,[1] many lovers, but a constant and enduring love for a single being—herself. It needs, then, no licence of extravagant postprandial oratory to compare the spirit of Pauline with the spirit of *Marianne*.

Albeit, never has the Royal envoy from the Court of St. James's, whoever he happened to be, selfishly wooed this spirit for himself. He has but fulfilled the rôle of intermediary in the age-long *affaire de cœur* between England and France, which from epoch to epoch now prospers and now languishes, now is hot and now is cold, and is occasionally indistinguishable from aversion; but, no matter what other liaisons intervene, will always subsist because it is the oldest of all European political *rapprochements*, and is based on a deep, mutual regard which no quarrel can permanently rupture nor caprice on the lady's part wholly destroy.

Thus, on the threshold, to neglect Pauline and her tenancy of this mansion, to which she imparted so much of her taste and so much of her character, would be to deprive our present narrative of the British Embassy in Paris of a very attractive and significant association. It may serve partly to explain the fascination the house has had for so many fair but impeccable Englishwomen who, like Lady Canning, looking back from the tragic India of the Mutiny, recalled its rooms and garden as "still for me the essence of all that is charming and

[1] H. Fleischmann: *Pauline Bonaparte et ses Amants*.

elegant in Paris." We may better understand the attachment of the witty Lady Granville and her daughters, one of whom (Lady Georgiana Fullerton) apostrophized it on her departure in a copious flood of verse beginning

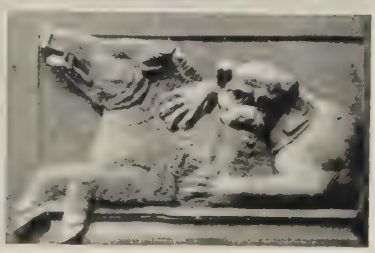
> Farewell, old house! my ears will nevermore
> Rejoice in the glad sound I loved so well.

Even the Ambassadors waxed sentimental. Lord Lytton knew every nook and corner of "*le nid de notre belle Pauline.*" In her garden he wrote volumes of poetry and died at last in her boudoir. The burly and celibate Lord Lyons, whom the Prussians temporarily dislodged in 1870, felt a thrill "in finding myself in the old house again, and am impatient to return to it for good." During twenty years he rarely, when in Paris, stirred from within its walls. Others of these illustrious personages shared the late Lord Bertie's pleasure in showing visitors over the Embassy, and dilating (once to an American, Mr. John Hay's, surprise), not upon the Iron Duke's dispatches, but upon the assembled mementoes of "the prettiest and wickedest of all the Bonapartes."

The mansion was built in 1723 by an obscure architect, Mazin, for Armand de Béthune, Duc de Charost, peer of France, and Baron d'Ancenis (born 1662), who was governor of the person of the young king, Louis XV. "The king," so we learn from one of the courtiers of the day, "at first made some difficulties about the choice of this nobleman, in spite of his well-known probity and piety, owing to the precipitate departure of his previous Governor, the Duc de Villeroy. His Majesty was so vexed that he refused to take food on the evening that Villeroy left his service. But he quickly became

reconciled, and, thus basking in the royal favour, the Duke set about building this hotel in the Faubourg St. Honoré. It became a centre for the illustrious persons in high service about the Court. Charost was appointed chief of the Royal Council of Finance and a Minister of the Council of State, which offices he held until his death in 1747. From a description of the mansion, deposited later in the century amongst the Archives of the Seine, we are told that " access to this hotel, situated between those of Poyanne and d'Esclignac, is indicated by an arch, adorned by pilasters surmounted by trophies in relief, and a rounded cornice containing a black marble plaque inscribed in large letters *Hôtel de Charost*, with the family device supported by two warriors armed with clubs. On one side of the courtyard were the stables, indicated by two carved horses' heads ; on the other the kitchens and offices, adorned with a wild boar's head. The house consisted of two floors besides a basement and a mansard roof fronted by a double Ionic portico. On the first floor were five large apartments leading into one another. The garden, comprising some two acres, contained a large lawn, about which were planted ninety-nine lime-trees, and two paths conducted to a gateway on the Champs-Elysées." At different periods both house and garden underwent various alterations and improvements.

The only incident in the pre-Pauline history of the Hôtel de Charost which has been recorded is a striking one. In 1785 it had been rented by the then duke, who had another mansion in Paris, to the wealthy Comte de la Marck, Prince d'Arenberg, and there two years later took place a momentous interview between Mirabeau and Queen Marie Antoinette's partisan, the Austrian ambassador, Mercy-Argenteau, as a result of



THE BRITISH EMBASSY. [*Photo: F. Contet.*

The Chancellery.
Entrance Hall.

Carved emblems
in Courtyard.

To face p. 18.

which the great tribune detached himself from the Jacobins and passed over to the party of the Court.

"At the appointed hour," records the Comte de Pimodan, "Mercy-Argenteau arrived in his carriage by the principal entrance in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, while Mirabeau slipped in, without being seen by the servants, by the gate of the garden, which extends as far as the Champs-Elysées, of which gate Mirabeau had the key. In this manner he could reach La Marck's chamber unobserved." Before this conference broke up it was arranged that Mercy-Argenteau would wait upon Marie Antoinette the next day at the Tuileries, and settle the terms upon which Mirabeau should be employed in the King's service.

This would seem to be the first recorded instance of diplomatic negotiation in the history of this house, which was to be destined under the First Empire to be notorious for intrigues of a tenderer sort.

On the 14th of April, 1803, a young and beautiful widow, accompanied by her maid and two gentlemen, one of whom was a lawyer named Michelot, entered the courtyard of the Hôtel Charost and passed into the mansion. She had for some time been negotiating with the owner, the relict of the third and last Duc de Charost. The negotiations had been successful, and she was now coming to take formal possession of her new property. The new-comer, by virtue of being the sister of the First Consul and the widow of General Leclerc, was already a great lady, and, chafing under the tutelage of her brother Joseph in the adjacent Hôtel Marbœuf, wished to have a house of her own.

The Princess Marie Paulette Bonaparte, *veuve* Leclerc, was born at Ajaccio, September 20, 1780, and was therefore now in the full bloom of her twenty-

three summers. Daily thereafter her worldly fortunes improved. In the following year her brother became Emperor, and settled upon her an annuity of 240,000 francs. An eligible husband had already been found for her in the person of the Italian Prince, Camillo Borghese, appointed an officer in the French Army. Marie Paulette's rosy prospects, therefore, justified her new enterprise. By borrowing 100,000 francs from her brother Joseph, and obtaining 240,000 francs from her sister Elisa on the security of a mortgage, she was able to satisfy the lawyers. The contract alone cost her 20,000 francs, and she had to spend immediately 30,000 on necessary repairs and furniture, a sum afterwards to be increased tenfold; for Paulette was by nature a luxurious lady and passionately fond of beautiful and elegant appointments.

It was not long after his marriage that Prince Camillo perceived himself to be merely an episode in the life of his beautiful and seductive wife. Luckily for his peace of mind he was on active service with his Imperial brother-in-law, and generally absent from Paris. In 1806 the Princess changed her name to Pauline, as being "more distinguished," in the same way that one sister, Annonciade, had become Caroline, and another, Marianne, had taken the name of Elisa.[1]

Pauline made her debut in her new character of Imperial Highness by a series of splendid receptions at the Hôtel Borghese. The guests noted that the mansion was furnished in exquisite taste in the style which came to be known as Empire. On the ground floor were three formal ante-chambers; a great dining-room lit by two lustres of sixteen candles each, set in the heads

[1] "*Aujourd'hui,*" comments M. Paul Jarry, "*on ferait le changement contraire!*"—*Bulletin de la Société Historique,* 1920.

of gilt zephyrs; also the yellow salon, the *salon d'honneur*, in crimson velvet, and the State bedroom in light-blue satin, adjoining a boudoir in violet. On the first floor were more salons, scarlet, green, and blue, besides small apartments. The Princess was a keen little housekeeper, and almost as much a martinet to her servants as was her Imperial brother. The slightest inattention or lapse in etiquette was visited by her severe displeasure. The porter, Grange, who once failed to close the gates after the passage of a carriage, was threatened with dismissal. There might be some small deviations from conventional propriety in the blue or the yellow salon, but it does not appear that any sort of laxity was tolerated below stairs in the Hôtel Borghese.

The Prince de Clary in his *Memoirs* narrates how in June 1810 he paid a visit to the hotel and gallery of the Princess Borghese. "The mansion is charming," he writes, "above all a certain bath-room.[1] The Princess ordinarily sleeps in a little bed ornamented with muslin, lined and embroidered in pink, and surmounted with feathers, which I thought in bad taste. It is so low and small that it has the air of a doll's bed. . . . The picture gallery adjoining the house, illuminated from above like that at Malmaison, is a charming apartment and filled with fine pictures." In the Duke of Charost's time a chapel had been installed in the house, and this Pauline converted into a billiard-room. The Princess's instructions as to how this room was to be furnished may still be read: "You will take six chairs from the yellow salon, also two easy chairs and two sofas. The walls must be covered with yellow and silver paper; there should be no pictures, but plenty of mirrors, one of which might

[1] Here Pauline took her famous milk baths, twenty litres a day being delivered for the purpose.

cost 1,700 francs." Similarly, the curtains were to be of certain dimensions and material, suspended on poles terminated in gilt ornaments, and even the price and style of the billiard table (2,200 francs) is laid down. These and hundreds of similar detailed directions were sent to her housekeeper or reader (*lectrice*), the faithful Jenny, Mlle Millo, who afterwards married M. de Salucès. She filled other rooms with exquisite furniture by Jacob, bronzes by Ledure, Demère, Feuchère, and Ravris. In this beautiful house, or in its garden fragrant with lilac and roses, Pauline received her lovers and her friends. We are told that according to the costume she wore was the tone of the conversation regulated. If she was in *négligé* or *demi-négligé*, it occasionally assumed a very free character indeed. She had one costume "for the sofa," composed of an English lace-cap, with clusters of pink ribbons, and a dressing-gown of Indian muslin with openwork embroidery lined with pink. But often her *tenue* was extremely free, for Pauline was very vain of her charms, and sat to painters and sculptors quite divested of raiment, moving thus about her own chamber in the presence of her intimates, "with as much ease and assurance as if she were fully dressed." As for the Prince Camillo, he rid her of his presence as often as possible, leaving his princess to seek solace in the arms of such splendid gallants as Canouville, of whom it is related that his devotion was so great that he once allowed the Court dentist to pull out a sound tooth in order to demonstrate the painlessness of the process to his *inamorata*. But it will hardly do in these pages to dilate upon Pauline's lovers. "Perhaps no woman since the time of the Emperor Claudius," declared Louis XVIII's Chancellor, Pasquier, "has surpassed her in the use she has made of her charms."

PRINCESS PAULINE BORGHESE.
(*Circa* 1814.)

To face p. 22.

Once the Emperor intervened and, professing to be scandalized at his sister's behaviour, ordered Canouville to rejoin his regiment at Dantzig. When, after a battle, his bleeding body was borne from the field, M. de Salucès, the husband of Princess Pauline's *lectrice*, reported to the intendant David that M. de Canouville was wearing in his bosom a miniature " having such a striking resemblance that it would have betrayed and compromised the original." He therefore took instant possession of it and destroyed it.

During an absence from Paris, September 17, 1812, Pauline wrote to her housekeeper : " You will lock up all the fine linen in a closet and take away the key. If the Prince Borghese comes you can tell him I have carried it off." Again she wrote : " Be careful to cover up the green salon and lock the billiard-room. I do not intend that the Prince's sojourn shall involve me in the least expense. He has shown me so little kindness that I wish to do nothing for him."

That Camillo did not merit such a reproach Pauline long afterwards admitted.

She had a special chest made at a cost of 8,000 francs to contain all her jewels and valuables, which she kept always in her bed-chamber, to be removed only when her husband came to inhabit the rooms allotted to him on the first floor. At such times Pauline slept below, and used to complain that the noise the unhappy Prince made in walking about overhead had a disastrous effect on her nerves.

Years passed and the Empire came to an end. When the Allies entered Paris the Princess was far away. She was in need of money. True, by the Treaty of Fontainebleau, which sent her illustrious brother into exile at Elba, Pauline was promised a pension of 300,000

francs. But it was not forthcoming, and she therefore instructed her agents in Paris to find a tenant for the mansion, which (April 15, 1814) had been appropriated under royal authority as a temporary lodging for the Austrian Emperor. This monarch, it is painful to note, signalized his brief occupancy by using a phrase about the owner of the mansion which should never be used lightly about any lady. It even shocked Fouché.

The Princess retired at the fall of the Empire to Rome, and afterwards, with her mother, to Elba. During the Hundred Days she sent her jewels to Napoleon: these were discovered after the Battle of Waterloo in the Emperor's carriage; the Allies took charge of them, and their subsequent fate is not known. Her brother's exile and death is said to have complicated a malady from which Pauline had long suffered, and she died at Florence, June 9, 1825, in the arms of the Prince Borghese, to whom in her adversity she had become reconciled.

CHAPTER II

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AS AMBASSADOR

WITH the abdication of Napoleon and the Restoration of the Bourbons, the Duke of Wellington's active military career seemed at an end. Diplomatic relations between England and France (which had been suspended, save for Lord Whitworth's brief regime and the abortive mission of Lord Lauderdale in 1806, for a full generation) were to be resumed. Both to Castlereagh, the Prince Regent, and the whole British nation there could be no more representative Ambassador to the restored Court of the Tuileries than Wellington himself. The only question was, Would he accept the post ? To the relief, and indeed to the surprise, of some of his friends and admirers, he accepted with alacrity. After all, he was only forty-five and he dreaded the idea of the inactivity of a long period of peace. He considered his great protagonist, the Corsican, finished and done with, and he welcomed the notion of himself established as the envoy of his sovereign in the French capital, playing a leading part as arbiter of the destinies of Europe. The Duke believed himself to be a born diplomatist, as he afterwards believed himself, even when all his friends had relinquished the illusion, to be a great statesman ; at any rate, he was not unaware of the influence which he would have over Louis XVIII and the Court of the Restoration.

The first step in his opinion was to secure suitable quarters for the Embassy. The Duke was always particular in such matters. He never undervalued outward state and ceremony, and yet he was a good man of business and always frugal with public money. With characteristic promptitude, then, soon after his arrival in Paris in May 1814, he began casting about for eligible headquarters.

It was at this juncture that a wealthy Englishman, Quintin Craufurd by name, long resident in Paris, appeared on the scene and offered his services. This Craufurd was a celebrated character and figures prominently in all the memoirs of the period.

Thirty-five years had passed since he had made a fortune in the service of the East India Company and had returned to spend it in Paris. Hither he had brought his wife, an ex-dancer, whose two children by the Duke of Würtemberg he adopted, and the Craufurds only quitted Paris during the Revolution. With the friendship of Talleyrand and the protection of the Emperor, the couple took a new hotel in the Rue d'Anjou St. Honoré, entertained lavishly, and were received into the best society of the capital. When the English arrived in 1814 they were welcomed by an elderly and opulent dilettante, perhaps the most notable of their compatriots resident in Paris. At the Tuileries Mr. and Mrs. Craufurd were received with particular favour because of certain assistance they had rendered the late lamented King and Marie Antoinette in 1791–92, and at their dinner-parties were to be found foreign potentates and princes, H.R.H. the Duke of Kent, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Holland, Henry Brougham, and many other distinguished new arrivals. A gentleman in the Duke's entourage having mentioned His Grace's need

of a suitable hotel to Craufurd, the latter instantly charged himself with the business of procuring one.

There were several mansions in his neighbourhood in the Faubourg St. Honoré, but none in Craufurd's opinion so suitable as the Hôtel Borghese. He thought the Princess Pauline would gladly dispose of it. On inquiry it was ascertained that Michelot, her agent, demanded a price of 850,000 francs for the hotel and its contents as it stood. The Duke objected both to the magnitude of the sum and of the mansion itself. Moreover, the Princess wished the whole to be paid in cash. She declared she did not care to give credit—even to the British Government. The negotiation promised to be a lengthy affair. After looking over a number of other mansions, including the Hôtel de Noailles, the Duke departed for London, leaving the matter of an Embassy building in the hands of his chief diplomatic colleague, Sir Charles Stuart.

Stuart, late Ambassador at The Hague, had been in Brussels during the Hundred Days, and had been instructed by the British Government to come to Paris and assist the Duke in organizing his Embassy. We shall hereafter see a good deal more of Stuart. When Wellington left for London in June to confer with his chief, Lord Castlereagh, at the Foreign Office, Stuart, who had previously established himself in sumptuous quarters of his own, remained behind as Minister Plenipotentiary, *ad interim*. To him the Duke wrote early in July :

My dear Sir :

The Prince de Borghese's house is so very large that however much I wish to have it, as thinking it the only house that I have seen that would perfectly answer, I feel a great disinclination to apply to Government

to purchase it. I must therefore give up all thoughts of it. I am afraid that I should find the opening in the rear of the Hôtel de Noailles, as well as its situation, very inconvenient. It is certainly, in other respects, the next best that I have seen to the Prince de Borghese's. The rooms in all the others that I saw appeared to me to be small for a large entertainment, such as I imagine I should be obliged to give; and I am very doubtful which to decide upon. Under these circumstances I must leave the matter to you.

I propose, if possible, to be at Paris by the end of the month, and if you should not have taken a house for me before my arrival, I must only go to yours till I can get one that will answer.

Several weeks, however, elapsed before Stuart succeeded in arranging matters with the Princess Pauline's agents, but when the Duke arrived with his diplomatic credentials on August 22, he went straight to the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré, from whence he wrote a week later[1] to the Secretary at the Foreign Office:

"Upon my arrival here I found that Sir Charles Stuart had brought the Princess de Borghese's agents as low as they could come, and I have come into her house, having determined on the purchase from what passed on the subject in London.

"The price agreed upon is 800,000 francs for the house and furniture complete, and 63,000 francs for the stable, which is a separate concern, and requires some repairs. The whole will come to about 870,000 francs; and considering the size and situation of the house, the number of persons it will accommodate, and the manner in which it is furnished, the purchase is a remarkably cheap one.

"I have not settled in what number of instalments the payments are to be made; but I understand there

[1] August 29, 1814.

will be no objection to as many as we please, and I will make the number as great as possible.

"I have a list of the furniture, which I propose to have verified by one of the gentlemen attached to the Embassy, and send it home to the office. I presume that the Government would be desirous of not having any addition made to the furniture nor any alteration to the house, without the positive authority of the Secretary of State, nor any repair without previous estimate to be submitted to the Secretary of State as soon as possible.

"I should certainly have willingly paid £2,000 or 48,999 francs a year for this house, if I could have hired it, and I shall have no objection to having that sum stopped from my salary for it."

A fortnight later (September 12) the Duke, further enlightened as to Pauline's need for ready cash, wrote again :

"We have not yet concluded the purchase of the house, as there is some difficulty on the part of the Princess's agents about the periods of payments. I do not propose, however, to relax upon this point.

"I shall be very much obliged if you will let me know upon whom I shall draw for the money for the purchase."

Eventually all was adjusted to the satisfaction of both parties.

By this time the Duke had already presented his credentials at the Tuileries and had made his debut (August 24) in the rôle of Ambassador.

For many decades there had been an agitation in England aimed at the abolition of the African Slave Trade. Such men as Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Zachary Macaulay had persuaded Parliament to legislate. But no measure to restrict the traffic could be operative by

England alone ; and one of the first hopes of the abolitionists was that, now that Bonaparte was replaced by a Bourbon prince whose long residence in England had inspired him with that country's humane ideals, a joint treaty might be signed forthwith.[1]

The Duke himself was known to be in keen sympathy with the abolitionists and was himself rather sanguine that he could prevail upon King Louis. But his very first interview opened his eyes to the difficulties of the situation. Next day (August 25) he sent his first formal dispatch from the Embassy to Castlereagh :

" From what I learn here, I have reason to believe that the opinions in the legislative body, and particularly in the House of Peers, are very much against the abolition of the slave trade : and that several ships are now fitting out in Nantes and Bordeaux, with the aid of British capital, to carry on the trade on the coast of Africa."

Louis XVIII had told the Ambassador frankly that " he must attend to the opinions and wishes of his own people. Opinions in France were by no means what they were in England upon the subject ; many years had elapsed and much discussion had taken place, and great pains had been taken by many individuals and societies before the opinions in England had been brought to that state of unanimity upon the subject." It could not, therefore, reasonably be expected that France could be ripe for such a reform.

All this was quite true, but it did not explain the strong opposition to the measure. As the Duke wrote

[1] Wellington wrote (July 20) to his brother Henry (afterwards Lord Cowley) from London : " I am unable to describe to you the degree of frenzy existing here about the slave trade."

a few days later (August 31) to the Right Hon. J. C. Villiers :

" The truth is there is no general knowledge, and therefore no general opinion, in France upon the slave trade. Those who know anything are proprietors of estates in the West Indies, slave-traders, shipowners, or trading politicians ; and the opinions of all these are strongly in favour of a continuance of the trade, and the efforts of Great Britain to put an end to it are attributed to commercial jealousy and a desire to keep the monopoly of colonial produce in our own hands."

Already the zealous Clarkson and the philanthropic Macaulay had come to Paris and presented themselves at the Embassy armed with books, papers, and petitions. Clarkson was reported in England as having said that the Duke told him that " national vanity was at the bottom of the opposition," a phrase to which the French Ambassador in London took exception.

" I did *not* tell Mr. Clarkson that it was a question of national vanity," wrote the Duke to Lord Liverpool (September 12). " It is one of profit ; and those interested in carrying on the trade, who are the only persons who have any information on the subject with very few exceptions, operate upon the national vanity by representing the question, not only as one purely English, but as one of English profit and monopoly."

Money, in the Duke's opinion, " might do a great deal with this class of person, certainly more than the island of Trinidad," the gift of which had been suggested. He questioned the policy of any territorial concession whatever, unless the British Government were quite sure it would be accepted.

The surprise and disappointment in England that

the powerful Duke of Wellington had not brought off the abolition of the slave trade at a single *coup* was widespread. Newspapers were filled with articles anything but complimentary both to the French and to the Duke and urging the British Ambassador to insist upon immediate action. To Wilberforce, who had a clearer appreciation of the difficulties of the situation, the Duke wrote (October 8) :

"You judge most correctly regarding the state of the public mind here upon this question. Not only is there no information, but, because England takes an interest in the question, it is impossible to convey any through the only channel which would be at all effectual, viz. the daily press. Nobody reads anything but the newspapers ; but it is impossible to get anything inserted in any French newspaper in Paris in favour of the abolition, or even to show that the trade was abolished in England from motives of humanity. The extracts made from English newspapers upon this, or other subjects, are selected with a view either to turn our principles and conduct into ridicule or to exasperate against us still more the people of this country ; and therefore the evil cannot be remedied by good publications in the daily press in England, with a view to their being copied into the newspapers here.

I enclose you a newspaper, published here only this day, to show you what the spirit of the pubiic journals and the public mind of this country is about us and our objects ; and I could send you other instances of the same description, even of this day." [1]

Already the Duke's eye noted signs of trouble in the air.

[1] *Despatches*, Wellington to W. Wilberforce, M.P. (October 8, 1814). One may note sorrowfully that the language of the concluding paragraph has been echoed by every single British Ambassador in Paris for over a century.

"Although the town of Paris continues in a state of perfect tranquillity," he wrote Castlereagh (October 13), "there exists a good deal of uncertainty and uneasinesss in the mind of almost every individual that is in it." Suspicions were abroad that the King intended to govern without a legislature. There was a want of experience in responsible government, and it was hard to get business done under the circumstances. Whatever the new British Ambassador proposed seemed fated to be shelved.

As regards the slave trade negotiations, some part of the delay was certainly to be attributed to the long illness and finally the death of M. Malouet, the Minister of Marine, to whose department the question had been referred. Again, "a good deal of effect appears to have been produced on the opinions of this changeable people" by a report which had been sent in by a General Desfourneaux on slavery in St. Domingo, which the King ordered to be investigated, at the cost of still further delay.

Nevertheless, on November 4 the Duke was able to write Wilberforce :

"We have now brought the abolition practically to the state in which it was before peace was made with France—with this additional advantage, that France is engaged to abolish entirely in five years. We must not relax in our endeavours to do more ; but it is really necessary to leave this interest, like others, in the hands of those whose duty it is to take care of it.

"I have had no reason to complain of the [English] newspapers lately, upon the subject of the slave trade, and I hope they will continue not to notice it for some time longer."

Meanwhile, from the moment the new Embassy had

thrown open its doors, it had been beset by a crowd of all sorts of people, from the British aristocrats and their wives and families, who after a long period of exclusion had crossed the Channel to set foot again in Paris, to lawyers, tradesmen, authors, artists, and simple adventurers.

"Let us remember," observes M. Boutet de Monvel, "that, save for some months following the Peace of Amiens, the English (apart from the prisoners of war) had not had since 1792 the least opportunity to penetrate into France. All those parts of Normandy and Picardy with which they used to be so familiar; all those sea-ports, Dieppe, Calais, and Boulogne, where they had been accustomed to forgather, had been brusquely and for a long period closed to them; and, above all, they missed Paris, the city which they preferred above all others on the Continent, and from whence they had from time immemorial set out on the Grand Tour. Worse than all, the Grand Tour itself was made impracticable. By means of the Continental blockade, it was not only from France, but from most of Europe, that Napoleon had decreed their exclusion, so that the most travel-loving and enterprising of European nations saw itself—a prisoner as it were—relegated for twenty-two years to its own island." [1]

Was it then wonderful that, once the embargo had been lifted and the Bourbons were again on the throne, there should have been a general rush to Paris?

"After having travelled over Europe from Naples to Stockholm," wrote Henry Brougham to Creevy in November 1814, "I declare that nothing can equal Paris for diversions of all kinds. Depend upon it, there is the place to live!"

[1] *Les Anglais à Paris.*

Brougham found in the capital his celebrated countryman Mackintosh, travellers like Bruce and Rich, the famous Mrs. Siddons, and a galaxy of lords and ladies, headed by the Duke and Duchess of Rutland, who all attended the routs, receptions, and banquets which the Duke gave at the Embassy. Of the others, many were in Paris on business relating to commercial and other claims for which they demanded the advice or the intercession of the Ambassador. One English solicitor, who was interested in the restoration of the property of the English and Scottish colleges, discovered the whereabouts of the long-missing papers of the exiled King James II, whose present custodians were ready to surrender them to the British Government for a price which the Duke rejected as excessive. Another came with title-deeds to a property which for a generation was supposed to belong to a Frenchman, the son of a guillotined noble.

A thousand severed threads had to be joined together again in the social, legal, and commercial world, and the staff in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré quickly discovered that they held no sinecure.

Amongst the English in Paris that autumn were Lord and Lady Hardwicke and their daughter, Lady Elizabeth Yorke, an intelligent and very pleasant young lady of twenty. This damsel, wholly unaware of what destiny had in store for her in a very near future, kept her eyes wide open, and made the most use of her opportunities for seeing what was going on and in noting the chief personalities of the hour. Thus she writes to an aunt :

" The Duchess of Wellington has arrived to take her station here. Her appearance, unfortunately, does not correspond with one's notion of an ambassadress or the

wife of a hero, but she succeeds uncommonly well in the part, and takes all proper pains to make herself and her parties agreeable. Last night we had a pleasant ball there, given on the model of all I have seen here—fiddles and lemonade—but no regular supper, which is better than our London custom, where the expense prevents people enlivening their assemblies with dancing because of the requisite food and wine it entails on them. As I neither waltz nor dance in quadrilles I have the more time to look on and stare at the lions. Soult was new to me. He and several other Marshals who were there cannot but owe Lord Wellington many a grudge, and their countenances are not of the most placid cast. Berthier (Prince of Wagram), who was Bonaparte's right hand, holds the principal office about the King." [1]

It appears that when the Duchess of Wellington first arrived a large company was invited to the Tuileries in her honour. "There was a great rummaging of precedents as to how it was to be conducted, and I don't think it was particularly well judged to go by the oldest rules of etiquette and determine that the company should come and go away without any one of the Royal Family blessing the sight. They think it answers best to make all approach as difficult as possible."

"I hope the Bourbons," Lady Elizabeth writes in the same letter (October 28, 1814), "are really firmly seated, though many sulky people, I don't doubt, internally regret Bonaparte, who made their own consequence, and many jealousies and divisions must be expected between the old and new nobility, and those emigrants who have recovered some of their possessions and those who have not. We have been frequently at evening parties, but scarcely in so totally French as to

[1] Hare: *The Story of Two Noble Lives.*

judge of their society ; when English people meet they will walk and talk at length, and do just as they please ; but, whatever spirit of liveliness may formerly have belonged to French manners, I am surprised to find they are all stiffness."

It was at one of these parties that Lady Elizabeth made the acquaintance of Sir Charles Stuart, the Ambassador's right-hand man, who in little more than a year was to become her husband.

Stuart is a rather enigmatic figure in nineteenth-century diplomacy. He was the son of one of Wellington's companions-in-arms, General Stuart, and grandson of George III's Prime Minister, the Earl of Bute. He had been educated for the diplomatic service. His mother was the daughter and co-heiress of Lord Vere Bertie, son of the first Duke of Ancaster. His person was not imposing, but he was intelligent and had engaging manners. In 1797, when only eighteen, he was sent to Weimar, from whence, after some months' sojourn, we find him writing to his father :

" I have got a Portuguese grammer [*sic*] since I was here, and with some difficulty have taught myself to read. If you meet with and can send me the works of Camoens, Barres, Lobo, Andrade, or any other good historical writer, I beg you will do so ; to me learning a foreign language is an amusement, and I treat it as such, not spending any of those hours which ought to be devoted to serious study in that way."

This sounds rather priggish, but Stuart was no prig.

" Upon the whole I have, during my stay at Weimar, been disappointed with respect to the learned men I

have found ; indeed, I cannot help wondering at many of them having found so great a reputation. It is true," he goes on, " their works are clever, but I find that few of them, except Wieland and Herder, act up to what they write ; as when a man, for instance, lays down in his writings principles of the strictest morality, and is seen to live a very debauched life, and employs his genius in writing little dirty pamphlets against other learned men. One meets with such tiresome pedantry in their conversation that it becomes hardly worth making their acquaintance." [1]

And again :

" It is my greatest ambition to become a good and honourable man, and a useful member of society and to my country."

If there was afterwards any derogation from these high ideals it must be attributed to Stuart's decided weakness for the fair sex—a weakness probably acquired in his stay at certain capitals of Europe during a particularly hectic period in the world's history. In 1801, the year of his father's death, Stuart had been appointed Secretary to the Embassy at Vienna, and, after various diplomatic experiences elsewhere, found himself in 1814 Ambassador at The Hague. Henry Brougham, who renewed an old acquaintance with him there, thus writes of him to Creevy, the diarist :

" C. Stuart will do whatever he can to make himself useful to you. . . . He is a plain man, of some prejudices, caring little for politics, and of very good practical sense. You will find none of his prejudices (which, after all, are little or nothing) at all of an

[1] Hon. Mrs. Stuart Wortley : *A Prime Minister and his Son.*

aristocratic or disagreeable kind. He has no very violent passions or acute feelings about him, and likes to go quietly on and enjoy himself in his way. He has read a great deal and seen much more and done, for his standing, more business than any diplomatic man I ever heard of. By the way—as for diplomacy or rather its foppery, he has none of this thing about him ; and if you ever think him close or buttoned up—I assure you he had it all his life just as much. He has no nonsense in his composition, and is a strictly honourable man, and one over whom nobody will ever acquire the slightest influence. I am so sick of the daily examples I see of havoc made in the best of men by a want of this last quality, that I begin to respect even the excess of it when I meet it. I thought you might like to be forewarned of your new Minister and therefore have drawn the above hasty sketch." [1]

Stuart is described by Hare as "singularly undistinguished in appearance," yet with "great charm of manner and much sound wisdom and shrewdness, though of a kind rather fitted to cope with important events than with the details of life."

Stuart had always hoped that he might eventually have the reversion of the Paris Embassy. A diplomatist by profession, he had, of course, no exalted opinion of the Duke's diplomatic powers. At any rate, he always contemplated the possibility of the Duke's being withdrawn elsewhere, or of ceasing to care for his post in Paris when the novelty had worn off. Meanwhile, Wellington thoroughly enjoyed Paris. There were cavillers who protested that he enjoyed it rather too well. The restraining influence of his Duchess was hardly apparent in the number and variety of his attentions to the female sex. His mistresses showed themselves only too

[1] *The Creevy Papers.*

notoriously. There was much lively gossip concerning the *genius loci* of the Embassy.

Before the close of 1814 the stage was set in Vienna for the great Conference which was to settle the affairs of Europe and precipitate the Holy Alliance, and the Duke of Wellington was named as British Envoy by the Prince Regent. His Grace therefore found himself obliged to quit the Hôtel Borghese, leaving Lord Fitzroy Somerset in charge. But on that fateful day in the following March when the courier brought to Paris the tidings of Napoleon's landing at Fréjus,[1] it was Sir Charles Stuart who was nominated to fill the vacant post. Just now, however, was no time for diplomacy. Instantly King, Court, and Diplomatic Corps departed in confusion, and the fevered history of the Hundred Days began.

[1] When he heard the news at Vienna the Duke wrote, with no great prescience : " It is my opinion that Bonaparte has acted upon false or no information, and that the King [Louis XVIII] will destroy him without difficulty."

CHAPTER III

SIR CHARLES STUART'S EMBASSY

DURING the Hundred Days the British Embassy—late the Hôtel Borghese—was deserted, save for a faithful porter and his family. None could foretell its fate: but at least Princess Pauline had received her promised ducats.

When Waterloo had been fought, when Napoleon was in flight and the Allies were streaming back to Paris, the Embassy porter was instructed to get the house ready to receive the British Ambassador.

But no one in the capital was quite sure who exactly the Ambassador was. The Duke of Wellington at the head of his troops, having been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Forces, could hardly at the same time continue to fulfil the functions of diplomatic representative of his sovereign.

It seemed, then, as if Sir Charles Stuart's chances were safe. Unhappily the Duke himself on his arrival showed little desire to be ousted from his position. After the Allied monarchs, he was easily the first man of the hour. He was universally considered to be the illustrious representative of his country. The British Government felt that it would hardly be opportune to replace him at once.

There may have been another circumstance which made Castlereagh hesitate about confirming Stuart definitely as the Duke's successor. Stuart was a bachelor:

he was not only a bachelor, but a gay bachelor. During his sojourn in Paris he had been rather more conspicuous in his gallantries than the Duke himself. Stuart was no hypocrite, and made little attempt to hide the interest he took in more than one charming princess of the ballet.

Now, as Castlereagh clearly realized, what public opinion might overlook or condone in a Duke of Wellington, would not be considered so charitably in an Ambassador of lesser rank and prestige, even though his grandfather had been Prime Minister of England. If, therefore, Stuart really wished to continue in his present post, he should lose no time in taking unto himself a wife. A high-born, gracious, and tactful Ambassadress would cover a multitude of peccadilloes in her lord. If, in addition, she had a fortune, Stuart's success and her own was assured.

"Sir Charles Stuart," wrote the clever and sprightly Lady Granville (*née* Cavendish), who was in Paris this summer, "is in a fever of mind, which he cannot conceal, from the fear of not remaining Ambassador here; and from all I hear he seems the best person, being excessively liked by the French. He has great jealousy of Lord Stewart,[1] who, it is said, is equally anxious to remain."

She met Sir Charles at dinner at Lord Castlereagh's, of whom she wrote:

"We dined at Lord Castlereagh's. His manner is very good and calculated to please; but how he gets on in French I cannot imagine. He called out to the *maître d'hôtel*:

"'*A présent, Monsieur, servez la dîner.*'"[2]

[1] The General, brother of Lord Castlereagh.

[2] Countess of Granville: *Letters* (July 31, 1815).

SIR CHARLES STUART, AFTERWARDS LORD STUART DE ROTHESAY.
Ambassador, 1815–1824.
(*From a portrait lent by Hon. Mrs. Edward Stuart-Wortley.*)

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The British Foreign Minister's French might be bad, but its quality was above that of some of his colleagues.

When Lord Westmorland, who was Lord Privy Seal, was asked his office he replied: "*Le Chancelier est le grand sceau [sot] ; moi, je suis le petit sceau d'Angleterre.*" At another time, feeling obliged to refuse a request, he said: "*Je voudrais si je coudrais, mais je ne cannais pas.*"

Captain Gronow tells another anecdote of this same peer. Accompanied by Sir Charles Stuart and himself they went to the Tuileries. "On our arrival in the rooms where the King was, we formed ourselves into a circle, when the King good-naturedly inquired after Lady Westmorland, from whom His Lordship was divorced, and whether she was in Paris. Upon this the noble lord looked sullen and refused to reply to the question put by the King. His Majesty, however, repeated it, when Lord Westmorland halloed out, in bad French, '*Je ne sais pas ! Je ne sais pas ! Je ne sais pas !*' Louis, rising, said, '*Assez, milord ; assez, milord !*'"

Whatever the exact degree of intimacy between the Duke and Stuart, it would seem from an anecdote related by Creevy that with the younger man the great soldier was occasionally off his guard. For when in company the subject of an impending military demonstration was introduced, "the Duke laughed," says Creevy, "and seemed not the least affected.

"But when on the same evening I made a remark about the Duke's indifference to Sir Charles Stuart, our Ambassador, the latter said in his curious, blunt manner, 'Then he is damned different with you from what he is with me, for I never saw a fellow so cut down in my life than he was this morning when he first heard the news!'"

During the month of August we find this same Lady Granville (a future Ambassadress) writing :

" Pozzo di Borgo, Metternich, and Sir C. Stuart are the people I like most to talk to here. Sir Charles is like a good Court guide or book of reference. He discovers what others are or would be about to a degree that must be very useful to him in his present situation."

At the Embassy she met Talleyrand, " with his dirty, cunning face and long coat," and Fouché, " a little spare, shallow, shrewd-looking man." She records a remark of Madame Juste de Noailles, who after a *contredanse* met someone who asked her how she did :

" *Aussi bien que l'on peut être après avoir dansé sur le tombeau de sa patrie.*"

And in truth, although Paris just then was the scene of great social activity, many of the French *noblesse* kept aloof from feelings of national pride. The town was filled with Allied officers and troops and civilians of every nationality, but principally English. Naturally, when the Duke was in town, Stuart at the Embassy was cast a good deal into the background. Wellington's position after Waterloo was a delicate one, but no other man could have replaced him. He had to exert all his authority to restrain Blücher and his Prussians, whose temper towards the French was anything but amiable. It is said that they would gladly have levelled the whole city to the ground. Hostile encounters with the civilians were frequent.

" Lord Grantham says that, in comparison with the Prussians, the English are almost *loved* in Paris ; and that the common people say the English soldiers are as well behaved as young ladies (*doux comme des*

demoiselles). He often saw the English soldiers strolling about in small parties and often singly, buying fruit and bargaining for it with the useful words *bone, not bone*, which settled the point very amicably." [1]

Wellington also had to be most tactful in his dealings with King Louis and the returned *émigrés*. Talleyrand and Fouché were known to be vindictive to such a degree against Napoleon that, but for the Duke's curbing hand, they would have pursued the fallen Emperor after the battle, and arrested and shot him as unceremoniously as he had shot the Duc d'Enghien.[2]

Meanwhile, mindful of Castlereagh's counsel, Stuart had found in Lady Elizabeth Yorke the young lady who exactly answered all his requirements. She was, indeed, very young and rather diffident in manner, but she was full of character and gave promise of being all that the most *exigeant* of Ambassadors could desire. She is described by Hare as "of homely appearance, but with manners of the most captivating courtesy, with an unequalled conversational charm and speaking French like a native."

He lost little time, therefore, in proposing for Lady Elizabeth's hand, and before autumn the announcement of the acting Ambassador's engagement set all Paris talking.

[1] Lady Granville: *Letters*.

[2] "General Nommelin has been here this day to negotiate for Napoleon's passing to America, to which proposition I have answered that I have no authority. . . . Blücher writes to kill him: but I have told him that I shall remonstrate, and shall insist on his being disposed of by common accord. . . . I have likewise said that, as a private friend, I advised him to have nothing to do with so foul a transaction . . . that if the Sovereigns wished to put him to death they should appoint an executioner—who should not be me."—Wellington to Sir Charles Stuart, June 28, 1815.

About this time, during a ball one night at the Embassy, the assembled guests were treated to an unwonted sensation. The Princess Pauline Borghese, Napoleon's sister, the former owner of this very hotel, was in Paris!—she was at this very ball!—she was at this moment on the arm of the Duke of Wellington! Every neck was craned to get a glimpse of this famous lady, who, for her part, seemed not a little astonished at the excitement she was creating. It was only later in the evening that the Ambassador explained that the lady was—or had been—a Bonaparte only by marriage, that she was none other than the former Miss Patterson, the beautiful American wife of Jérôme Bonaparte, afterwards King of Westphalia, whose marriage had been annulled by the Emperor. Young Albert Gallatin, the son of the American Minister, afterwards recorded in his diary:

"Madame Patterson Bonaparte's conversation was most brilliant at supper last night. She said that when in Paris just after the Hundred Days she was at a ball at the British Embassy. She noticed that she was much stared at and that some of the ladies curtsied to her. She asked the Duke of Wellington what it meant, and he told her she was taken for Pauline Bonaparte, as she was so strikingly like her, and that people were so amazed at thinking Pauline Borghese would have dared come back to France. The Ambassador came up to hand her to supper. This intrigued the company all the more. She is frightfully vain."

Two days later[1] he writes:

"Father had an audience of the King this morning. He suddenly said: 'I hear that Madame Jérôme Bona-

[1] August 12, 1816.

parte is with you. Pray express to her our regret that she will not come to our Court, but we know her reasons for not doing so.' When father told her she was much gratified and said: 'That Corsican blackguard would not have been so gracious.' "

On the 4th of February, 1816, Stuart was married and led back his youthful and rather timid bride to the *nid de Pauline* in the Faubourg St. Honoré. If there lingered any doubts of the young lady's fitness for the important station she was thus called upon to fulfil, they were quickly set at rest by the charm and simplicity of her behaviour, exhibited under the most trying circumstances.

The presentation of the new Ambassadress at the Court of Louis XVIII, on February 26, 1816, was the occasion for the first time since the Restoration of what is known in Court language as a *traitement.* A dozen ladies, most of them bearing titles, were summoned to be present at the residence of the Duchesse d'Angoulême [1] at two o'clock. Amongst them was the future Comtesse de Boigne, whose father was the French Ambassador in London. To her pen we owe a spirited account of the ceremony and Lady Elizabeth's part in it.

" We were all assembled in Madame's drawing-room, when the usher went to inform Madame Damas that the Ambassadress was arriving.

" At the same moment Madame, who had probably been looking through her window, according to her custom, came in through another door, magnificently dressed in Court costume as we all were. Hardly had she time to greet us and sit down when Madame de

[1] Marie Theresa Charlotte. *Madame Royale,* daughter of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, married to the Duc d'Angoulême, afterwards Dauphin. " The only man in the family," said Napoleon of her.

Damas returned with the Ambassadress, accompanied by the lady who had been to fetch her, the masters of the ceremonies and the introducers of the Ambassadors ; these personages remained by the door.

" Madame rose, made one or two steps towards the Ambassadress, resumed her arm-chair, and placed Lady Stuart in a chair with a back, which was standing ready on her left hand. The ladies of title sat down behind them on stools, and the rest of us remained standing. This stage of this conversation was somewhat lengthy, and Madame sustained the conversation by herself. Lady Elizabeth, who was young and shy, was too embarrassed to answer except in monosyllables, and I admired the way in which Madame discussed England and France, Ireland and Italy, from which country Lady Elizabeth had arrived, in order to fill the time, which the slow and painful approach of the King prolonged to an undue length." [1]

At length the monarch, who was a martyr to gout, entered. Everyone rose amidst the deepest silence. This silence he broke when he reached the middle of the room by uttering in the gravest and most sonorous voice, without moving a muscle of his face, the futile observation which formality had enjoined since the time of Louis XIV :

" Madame, I did not know you were in such good company ! "

Madame replied with another phrase, equally conventional, and then His Majesty addressed some words to Lady Elizabeth. She continued to reply in monosyllables ; the King remained standing, as did everyone else, and after a few moments he withdrew.

The company had scarcely resumed their seats than they were obliged to rise immediately, upon the entrance of Monsieur (the Comte d'Artois, afterwards Charles X).

[1] *Memoirs of the Comtesse de Boigne* (1815–19).

"Ought I not to observe that I did not know you were in such good company?" he asked with a smile; he then went up to Lady Elizabeth with the utmost grace, shook hands with her and made some compliments. He refused to accept a chair which Madame offered him, but bade the ladies sit down, and stayed much longer than the King. The ladies rose as he went out, and sat down again, to rise once more upon the entrance of the Duc d'Angoulême; upon this occasion, after the first compliments, he took a chair and entered into conversation. It seemed to the Comtesse de Boigne that the "shyness of the Ambassadress gave him courage."

The departure of the Duc was again accompanied by rising and sitting down as before. Madame de Boigne says she

"was irresistibly reminded of the genuflexions on Good Friday. At the end of a few minutes a lady of honour informed the Ambassadress that she was ready to receive her orders. Madame observed that she feared to fatigue her if she detained her longer, and she went away escorted as she had come. She entered the King's carriage, accompanied by the lady who had been to fetch her. The King's coach, with six horses and in full dress, followed her empty. Madame spoke to us for a moment concerning the presentation, and went back to her rooms, to my great satisfaction, for I had been already two hours on my legs and was getting weary of the honour. It was necessary, however, to be present at the dinner after the *traitement*."

At five o'clock poor Lady Elizabeth returned, this time accompanied by her husband and several English ladies of high rank. All the French ladies who had been

present at the reception were invited, and gentlemen of both nationalities were also present.

"The *major-domo*, at that time the Duke d'Escars, and Madame's maid of honour did the honours of the dinner, which was excellent and magnificent, but by no means well appointed, as was the case with every function at the Court of the Tuileries. Immediately afterwards everyone was glad to be allowed to retire and go to rest after all this etiquette. The men were in uniform and the women in full dress, but not in Court dress. Neither the King, the Princesses, nor the Princes were there; but I noticed behind a screen Madame and her husband, who amused themselves by looking at the table and the guests before going up to dinner with the King."

It was a ludicrous example of Bourbon pride and perversity. No wonder that the Comtesse de Boigne was unable to understand

"how foreign sovereigns, who receive French Ambassadors at their tables upon intimate terms, could be willing to endure in the person of their representatives the arrogance of the House of Bourbon. It was far from courteous not to invite the Ministers to their own residence, but to make them come with all these people, and this *in fiochi* to a servant's dinner, had always seemed to me the last degree of impertinence. This dinner was, no doubt, attended regularly by people of good family, but it was the table of second-rate importance in the Palace, the King's holding first place. They really dined in the ante-room of the Duchess d'Angoulême."

Strange to think that after the Revolution, and all that had happened since that upheaval, King and Court would have dared to revive these feudal cere-

monies! Yet, but for poor old Louis' physical infirmities, there might even have been a return of the eighteenth-century *couchers* and levées. Truly, the Bourbons had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing!

Horace Walpole's friend, the eldest Miss Berry, who was in Paris in March 1816, thus writes of the new Ambassadress:

"I saw Elizabeth *chez moi* for a few minutes on her return from Court in all her *beaux atours*, and remarkably well she looked. Her success here amongst the French is, I assure you, very great, and she has already more French acquaintances than I dare be sworn any ambassadress has had since the days of Lady Stormont or any other one *du bon vieux temps*."

From the Embassy Lady Elizabeth herself wrote to her husband's aunt (February 27), Lady Louisa Stuart:

"I could tell you a long story of the awful ceremony yesterday, but I can only give you a short abridgement."

In her account she admits that she found it "a very trying moment to be ushered into Madame's room, where she sat with the whole Court about her and a row of ladies on tabourets on each side, with one for me in the middle of the avenue."

All Paris society admitted, nevertheless, that the new Ambassadress had acquitted herself *à merveille*, and almost immediately she was launched into all sorts of Parisian hospitalities—beginning with her own grand reception at the Embassy, which the Duke of Wellington honoured with his presence and at which he danced with his hostess.

Hearing of her daughter's triumphs, Lady Hardwicke

resolved to join her in Paris ; rather *too soon*, as some thought, who were not too partial to the elder lady—amongst whom, it is to be feared, as time went on, was the bridegroom himself.

Of course, as Lady Hardwicke wrote, Elizabeth wished, in spite of the engrossing character of her new duties, to pass *some* time with her husband, " who was so deeply occupied with business."

" The small dinners at the Embassy are very comfortable and the great dinners very handsome. The Hotel is certainly a very fine one and very fit for all purposes of show. The garden is delightful, though from the extreme bad weather it is only lately that Elizabeth has made use of it. The Duke is still here, always going but never gone. I am happy that we are still under his care, though all seems quiet enough."

A few days later [1] Lady Hardwicke wrote :

" On Saturday our new Ambassadress had her second day of reception, which was attended by all the French folk of the first class. These parties were without invitation : it was only made known that the Ambassadress received on that day. I am happy to tell you that all succeeded perfectly well, and that our dear Elizabeth had very great success. . . ."

This was a weight off the maternal mind, because,

" as the French ladies did not at first seem over-fond of us and were many of them inclined to see how others did before they stepped forward, it is very satisfactory to know that it is now the fashion to be mightily pleased with *' Madame l'Ambassadrice,'* whom they pronounce to be *' parfaitement bien mise et d'avoir l'air très distingué.'* . . . Though I must not say all I think of

[1] On March 7, 1816.

the members of French society to Sir Charles, yet I will whisper to you across the Channel that they look very far from being the bright examples of elegance and ease that we used to hear so much of in former days."

Lady Elizabeth herself writes to old Lady Stuart (June 10, 1816) :

"We have a dinner of near forty on Wednesday to meet the Duke, and I shall have a party on Thursday, and in this wintry weather I think we may open the gallery and let them dance, without the whole apparatus of a hall. . . . I have now achieved at least knowing all the French people who come to my parties, but I am puzzled now and then with the English, if I have not a clue to their names when I see their faces."

Stuart, in his mother-in-law's opinion, was

"well aware of his own good fortune in having obtained such a treasure, and it is also of considerable importance to the comfort of *both* that she is very much approved of by the society among whom she at present exists.

"But it will provoke you if I tell you how they express their praise. They say she has all the manners of a Frenchwoman and is perfectly well-dressed. I know you, my dear Mrs. Yorke, will exclaim, 'Then she is spoiled, both inside and out' ; but we must take it as they mean it."

After some weeks' sojourn at the Embassy the Ambassador's mother-in-law finally departed : but in the following March news arrived which made her resolve to rejoin her daughter, although she was in some uncertainty as to how Sir Charles would take this fresh visitation.

On March 19 her ladyship turned up at the Embassy,

just as dinner was being announced. She explained brightly that she was "only the monthly nurse" who had looked in to make inquiries. She found her daughter looking uncommonly well. In one of her letters she mentions:

"We have opened a new door which will enable the expected babe to have such a superb nursery that it will take itself for the King of Rome."

On March 31 there was born at the Embassy the baby who grew up to become the Countess Canning. "Pray forgive her for being a girl," Lady Hardwicke writes. "At that moment Sir Charles would have forgiven even *two* girls. . . . The first look of the young lady was so strikingly like her father as to make us all laugh."

As Sir Charles Stuart was a notably plain man, we must take this as further testimony that new-born infants are never very beautiful.

Queen Charlotte became the godmother of little "*Mademoiselle l'Ambassadrice,*" as the Embassy porter called her.

A year later (April 14, 1818), in the bed-chamber of the childless Princess Pauline, another daughter, Louisa (afterwards the Marchioness of Waterford), first saw the light.

Meanwhile, other labours than those of love had been proceeding at the Embassy. Official duties were chiefly of routine. As may easily be understood, while the Duke and his army were still in military occupation of the country, while the monarchs and statesmen of the Allied Powers were dealing directly with each other, there were few questions of policy with which Stuart at this period was called upon to deal.

Yet there were dispatches and weekly reports, chiefly as to the state of public opinion in Paris, constantly going off in the Ambassador's bag to the Foreign Office in London. The Press was constantly watched for symptoms of disaffection. The utterances and movements of Radical politicians were reported. News of secret political meetings and even of learned societies whose members are suspected of Jacobinism, Republicanism, Bonapartism, Anglophobia, and what not, form the staple feature of Stuart's official activities.

As a specimen of one of the Ambassador's dispatches take the following to Castlereagh (September 29, 1817) :

"My dear Lord :

"I think it my duty to acquaint your lordship that a circumstance has created much bad blood among the principal members of the Royal Family. Some days since the King met the Duke and Duchess of Orleans in a curricle during his morning drive. In a conversation which took place with the Duchess of Berri in the evening, her Royal Highness observed that she expected much gratification from a similar excursion, as the Duke of Berri had promised to drive her out in a new curricle, which would be ready in the course of a few days. The King expressed his disapprobation of this intention, saying : '*Il m'est bien égal que le Duc et la Duchesse d'Orléans se cassent le cou, mais je vous ordonne de ne pas vous aventurer en pareille équipage.*'

"I am sorry to say that the indiscreet repetition of this conversation on the part of the Duchess to her aunt on the following morning has renewed the jealousies which had apparently subsided during the last three months." [1]

Here is another of later date (November 9, 1820) :

[1] F.O., France : Stuart to Castlereagh

"My dear Lord:

"The King having repeatedly complained that the dullness of his Court and the want of society since the dismissal of the Duc Decazes had rendered his life extremely irksome, it has long been evident that His Majesty would take advantage of the first opportunity to establish a confidential intercourse with some person whose manners and conversation might offer some amusement to his leisure moments.

"There is no longer any doubt respecting the individual who is honoured with this distinction. The Vicomtesse du Cayla, daughter-in-law of General the Comte du Cayla, who superintended the household of the late Prince de Condé, being involved in a lawsuit with her husband, found it necessary some months since to apply in person to His Majesty for protection. Her conversation having pleased the King, His Majesty expressed his hope that she would repeat her visit; and so great an intimacy has ensued that she not only passes much of her time in the Royal apartments, but an epistolary correspondence occupies the hours when she is absent from the Tuileries."

In justice to the lady Sir Charles proffered his testimony that she was charming in both mind and body.[1]

After the Duc de Richelieu's death there followed the Ministries of Dessolle and Decazes, with the latter of whom Stuart was on friendly terms. Decazes, wrote Bulwer later, was "the intimate friend of Louis XVIII; he had great popularity in the country, many friends in the Chamber. He had a graceful manner, an imposing person; great tact, considerable talent, and

[1] She was originally Zoë Talon, an adventuress and now aged thirty-six. She continued for four years to be the aged monarch's confidante, receiving money and many costly gifts. Yet the relationship is declared to have been platonic.

very wise and large views in favour of the industry and the intelligence of the country."

When Chateaubriand was Minister he became very intimate with Sir Charles, and in his *Mémoires* has something—and that not very flattering—to say of him :

"Stuart, like all his compatriots, adored disorder when abroad : his diplomacy consisted of the police, his dispatches, his reports.

"He liked me well enough when I was Minister, because I treated him without ceremony, and my door was always open to him. He came into my room in riding-boots at all hours, dirty and dressed like a bandit, after running about the Boulevards with certain women whom he paid badly and who publicly addressed him as 'Stuart.'"

The French statesman goes on to say :

"I had conceived diplomacy on a new plan and, not having anything to hide, I spoke openly : I would have shown my dispatches to the first-comer, because I had no other project than the glory of France, and this I was determined to achieve in spite of all opposition.

"I have said a hundred times laughingly to Sir C. Stuart, 'Don't seek a quarrel with me. If you throw down the gauntlet I will pick it up. France has never made war with you on equal terms : that is why you have beaten us : but don't trust in this too much.'"

M. de Marcellus, who was at one time French Ambassador in London, observes in a note to the *Mémoires* that Chateaubriand[1] had

"neglected to cite the source whence he had drawn his biographical details concerning Sir Charles Stuart, British Ambassador during his Ministry. I will supplement this

[1] Chateaubriand : *Œuvres*, vol. v, p. 27.

omission. This source is myself. It is I, in fact, who dared to lift, but for his private edification alone, a corner of the veil which hid these gallant mysteries of diplomacy."

There exists, unhappily, a good deal of testimony that Stuart was, to say the least, careless of the proprieties in his private life, and was rather too often behind the scenes at the Opera when he should have been engaged at the Embassy. In the following year (1817), when the Granvilles were again visiting Paris, Lady Granville writes :

"Sir C. Stuart is all graciousness. He was here yesterday and very entertaining, *le moins mari que possible, affichéing* the worst company and lowest connections, but I understand has *des égards* for Lady Elizabeth, with which she is perfectly satisfied. He lent us his box at the Opera. Sir C. Stuart and Lord Somerset were with us." [1]

There are frequent references to Sir Charles in Lady Granville's lively letters from Paris. Thus in June 1817 :

"Went with Sir Charles to the theatre. . . . Sir C. stays almost always behind the scenes, and winks and nods are going on all the time between him and the actresses. Lady Elizabeth is not more romantic than is to be wished, so I do not think anybody has a right to object to anything but *le genre* of his infidelities, which *I* think deplorable."

[1] Of one of Stuart's flames, La Bigottine, whom she saw in *Le Carnaval de Venise*, Lady Granville thought that she "acted better than she dances," while, so far from the female performers being under-clad, her ladyship mentions petticoats "five miles long."

And again:

"Sir C. talked of nothing, could think of nothing, but the Farinis and Anatoles at the Opera House.

"Sir C. Stuart has no peace till he hears how *Georges* [a popular danseuse], as he calls her, is received in London."

Lady Granville at this time found Lady Stuart

"very agreeable and amiable, and by dint of rouge and an auburn wig looks only not pretty, but nothing worse. Sir C. praises her to me with enthusiasm, and as she does not seem to mind his theatrical career, I am sure I do not know who should." [1]

In all this there was little to hint at the future long-drawn-out rivalry which was to subsist between these two high-born women, lasting upwards of twenty years, during which they were alternately wives of the British Ambassador in Paris. During her sojourn in 1817 Lady Granville saw a good deal of the Stuarts, meeting them at the Embassy and elsewhere, even driving out with them on excursions to St. Cloud and the country about Paris. She and Lord Granville also attended the christening and ball in honour of the tiny daughter of the house, Louisa.

"Sir C. was wretched," Lady Granville notes, "*voué* to a little fat duchess, and Lady Elizabeth is after him to prompt civilities, which he performs like a pug-dog going to snap."

The truth is that Sir Charles was just then not very happy at the Embassy. He felt that the Duke of Welling-

[1] On a previous occasion she had noted: "I think her manners very pleasing and she looks sensible."

ton was overshadowing him. He wished he would remain at his military headquarters at Cambrai instead of coming so often to Paris. Lady Granville's letters are sprinkled with allusions to this subject :

" Lady Holland dined the other day with the Stuarts and was very much pleased with Lady Elizabeth, but there was a very Great Man there who chose not to acknowledge her or Lord H. This has caused much discussion. The Great Man says they would not bow to him, *et cetera*."

On one occasion a petition was prepared to be signed by all the foreign Ambassadors concerning Brazil, and the English newspapers announced that the Duke had signed it.

" Sir C. Stuart is furious at the Duke of Wellington's name being put among the signatures, but the fact is that he seems to be to all intents and purposes Ambassador here. Sir C. must resign himself to play second fiddle."

Stuart complained bitterly to Castlereagh, but what could be done against the Duke of Wellington ?

There is nearly always a touch of pleasant malice about Lady Granville's observations. She is irreverent even about the mighty hero of the day :

" The Duke is here, but his wife is at Cambrai, and his loves dispersed over the earth."

At the dinner-parties at the Embassy the talk quite naturally gravitated towards the former owner of the mansion, the Princess Pauline. All sorts of stories were recalled about her former love affairs, and to these were

often added fresh tidings of the wonderful little lady, who in her thirty-seventh year was now living in Florence, making fresh conquests, even among the English milords:

"Madame de Coignas says that Lord Gower is dying for the Princess Pauline, that she is '*jolie comme une petite princesse de conte de fée; mais elle est bête, mais bête.*'"

At another time it is the impressionable Lord Jersey who has fallen a victim to Pauline's charms. He and his lady have just arrived in Paris from Italy:

"Lord Jersey looks old and careworn and has evidently been making love to La Princesse Borghese."

How amused is Lady Granville at Lady Jersey's simplicity in joining in her husband's praises of Pauline —the wicked but still fascinating Pauline!

"Villiers [Lord Jersey] says that her foot looks as if it never had worn a shoe."

Her bare foot! At this naïve tribute related by her friend, Lady Granville cannot refrain from the written exclamation: "Poor, innocent Lady Jersey!"

CHAPTER IV

THE ADVENT OF THE GRANVILLES

NOTWITHSTANDING the notorious *faiblesses* of Sir Charles Stuart, it is not certain that they differed very greatly from those of many other fine gentlemen, even statesmen and diplomats, of that day. True, others might seek distraction in the bottle or the gaming-table, but the era of the stoics, of blameless private lives, of "stern and unbending Tories," and of pale and ascetic Whigs, the era of Grey and Aberdeen, of Peel, of Palmerston and Russell and Gladstone, had scarcely dawned. And it cannot be denied that, even if opera dancers and ladies of easy virtue did run after the British Ambassador on the Boulevard, calling him "Stuart" *tout court*, even if certain staid British matrons did condole with his respected mother-in-law (Lady Elizabeth herself would not listen even to their innuendoes for a moment!), Stuart's popularity with both the English and the French at this time was noteworthy. It cannot truly be said that he was equally popular with the King and the Duchesse d'Angoulême, and the higher *noblesse* reserved their greater intimacy for the Duke of Wellington as long as he continued in France; but, at any rate, the Ambassador's wife had no reason to complain of any lack of cordiality. She grew to be on terms of really close friendship with the Angoulêmes, the Comte d'Artois, the Duc and Duchesse de Berri, and other members of the Royal and

high aristocratic families. Stuart owed a very great deal to his wife, and to the fact that he was the father of a pair of really lovely children : but unquestionably he also owed something to his own qualities. Writing forty years later, the well-informed Captain Gronow,[1] who had been one of the first English officers to enter Paris after Waterloo, and who subsequently dwelt for many years in France, wrote :

" England was represented at this period by Sir Charles Stuart, who was one of the most popular Ambassadors Great Britain ever sent to Paris. He made himself acceptable to his countrymen, and paid as much attention to individual interests as to the more weighty duties of State. His attachés, as is always the case, took their tone and manner from their chief, and were not only civil and agreeable to all that went to the Embassy, but knew everything and everybody, and were of great use to the Ambassador, keeping him well supplied with information on whatever event might be taking place.

" The British Embassy in those days was a centre where you were sure to find all the English gentlemen in Paris collected from time to time. Dinners, balls, and receptions were given with profusion throughout the season. In fact, Sir Charles spent the whole of his private income in these noble hospitalities. England was then represented, as it always should be in France, by an Ambassador who worthily expressed the wealth of the great country to which he belonged. At the present day [concluded the captain, writing in 1862], the British Embassy emulates the solitude of a monastic establishment ; with the exception, however, of that hospitality and courtesy which the traveller and stranger are wont to experience even in monasteries."

From which the reader will gather that Lord and Lady Cowley, who then occupied the *nid de Pauline* in

[1] *Reminiscences.*

the Faubourg St. Honoré, were by no means so friendly to Captain Gronow as he, in his capacity of ex-military man, ex-M.P., and budding author, felt he had a right to expect. In any case, the tribute to Sir Charles Stuart and his regime is whole-hearted, and deserves to be set against the later aspersions of Palmerston, Greville, and numerous others.

If Stuart was not entirely happy in his domestic life he ought to have been: Lady Elizabeth never spared herself either in her balls and dinner-parties or in making the attachés and occasional visitors under her roof comfortable. As for the Stuart children, already their beauty attracted attention as they strolled out together in the Champs-Elysées. Lady Rose, writing in her old age in 1893, recalled that

"In their devotion to each other Charlotte and Louisa were one, though as opposite as possible—Charlotte gentle, retiring, clever, and goodness itself, never saying or doing what she ought not; Louisa in the highest spirits, always getting into trouble by hearing or seeing what was not intended for her, to the great distress of Miss Hyriott, their excellent governess, and perfectly devoted to her paint-boxes at ten years old."

The young Duchesse de Berri had taken a great fancy to the children when they were quite tiny, and they were often visitors with their nurse to the garden of the adjacent Palais de l'Elysée. The King himself never failed to inquire after them, and occasionally to send them little gifts. The eldest of the sisters was, however, not yet three when the Berris gave their first great ball, and in after-life recalled how the stir of it penetrated even to the nursery.

On October 29, 1818, at a ball at the Embassy, all

LORD GRANVILLE.
Ambassador, 1831–1843.

To face p. 64.

the French royalties, save only the King himself, were present.

"I was," owns Lady Elizabeth, in a letter to her aunt, "quite surprised to see the Duchesse d'Angoulême come, but she and all were full of the pleasure they felt in showing respect to an English house."

On this occasion her cup of happiness was full when she saw the Duke of Cambridge dancing with the Duchesse de Berri.

So important an event had involved much skill and ingenuity as well as labour. Lady Elizabeth and her aunt, Lady Louisa Stuart,

"worked hard yesterday, and our supper-rooms were as fête-like as could be only by dint of lighting and sticking up green, and artificial flowers, around the columns. I saw that the *tapissier* had not a notion of it, and we stood a bad chance till I got the gardener and bid him ornament it *just as he would do at a fête of his own*. So he whipped down some of our evergreens and twisted about the branches, and soon made it very pretty."

In January 1819 the Duke of Gloucester came to Paris, and there was another great ball, with royalties present, in his honour.

Writing on November 3 following, Lady Stuart (or Lady Betty as she began universally to be spoken of) records:

"We have just dispatched a large dinner-party, chiefly English, with Madame de Staël and the Duchesse de Broglie. I must own that I was very glad to see them both, though Sir Charles prophesies that the Staël will talk herself out of Paris, if she does not take care.

" Meantime she is well received at Court. Her line is abuse of the Allied armies, and the English in particular. ' You ought to let us shift for ourselves, and not dictate to our nation.' I shall be sorry if she does get over-unreasonable or violent, because her house will be a pleasant one, where all sorts meet. Albertine's conversation is full of abuse of the English ; however, she says we are ' the best of their enemies.' "

" Did I tell you," she writes again, " that amongst the company at our last dinner there was Madame du Coylin, one of the *early* flames of Louis XV ? Her eyes sparkle still at eighty-five, and the flirtation between her and Mr. Wortley all dinner-time was excellent."

Of course, the Stuarts also went out a great deal.

" You would like dining with us at Madame de Staël's. Talma will be there to recite to Mr. Canning, who does not admire him."

Of the attachés several were rather over-fond of cards and gaming, and were members of the Salon des Etrangers and other celebrated Paris gaming establishments. But that this passion for play was not confined to the younger members of the Stuart official household let Gronow testify :

" Fox, the Secretary of the Embassy, an excellent man, but odd, indolent, and careless . . . was seldom seen in the daytime, unless it was either at the Embassy in a state of *négligé* or in a bed. At night he used to go to the Salon des Etrangers ; and if he possessed a napoleon, sure to be thrown away at hazard or *rouge-et-noir*.

" One occasion, however, fortune favoured him in a most extraordinary manner. The late Henry Baring, having recommended him to take the dice-box, Fox replied, ' I will do so for the last time, for all my money is thrown away upon this infernal table.' Fox staked

all he had in his pockets ; he threw in eleven times, breaking the bank, and taking home for his share 60,000 francs.

" After this several days passed without any talkings being heard of him ; but upon my calling at the Embassy to get my passport viséd, I went into his room, and saw it filled with Cashmir shawls, silk, Chantilly veils, bonnets, gloves, shoes, and other articles of ladies' dress. On my asking the purpose of all this millinery, Fox replied, in a good-natured way, ' Why, my dear Gronow, it was the only means to prevent those rascals at the salon winning back my money.' "

Fox was succeeded by H. C. J. Hamilton, who lasted as Secretary until 1833, in the time of the Granvilles.

Amongst the frequent guests at the Embassy was Prince (afterwards King) Leopold, who had married Princess Charlotte of England. In 1819 he told Lady Stuart that he had made up his mind to settle down permanently in England. After one of his visits the Ambassadress heard an interesting piece of news.

" The Duchess of Kent has lain in of a daughter. I am glad it is over before Leopold's arrival."

The new-born babe was Queen Victoria, whom a quarter of a century later Lady Stuart's husband was destined to represent at the Court of the Tsar of Russia !

Another visitor was Oscar (Bernadotte), the Crown Prince of Sweden, of whom Lady Elizabeth writes : " Though well-enough looking, there is nothing to make one forget Grandpapa's counting-house at Bordeaux."

In February 1820 the Stuarts were shocked when one of the attachés rushed in to tell them of the assassination at the Opera of the Duc de Berri, " the only popular prince of the Bourbon family." The blow fell like a thunderbolt on the Ministry, and Decazes resigned. " The Government of M. Decazes," declared Chateau-

briand, " has slipped in the blood of the Duc de Berri." At any rate, after that fall there also fell the courage of the old King, and he left to his successor the task of battling with the rising spirit of revolt. Lady Elizabeth hastened to express her sympathy for the poor young Duchesse, who was afterwards to lead such a chequered career.[1]

From time to time in the years that followed there were rumours of a change in the Ambassadorship. Once, in 1823, Lady Elizabeth read in the English newspapers that Lord Granville had been sent to The Hague " on his way to a more brilliant Embassy," but, she wrote, a little arrogantly, " we have no intention of making room here. Sir Charles gets deeper and deeper into business every day."

Alas ! in the year following the blow fell. Louis XVIII died in September, and George Canning, the Foreign Minister, no friend of Stuart's, seized the occasion to dispatch his friend, Lord Granville, " on a special mission of condolence to the Court of the new monarch." This was but a paving of the way, and the announcement could only have one meaning. Stuart was superseded. Talleyrand was greatly distressed by the news ; he said England should not change her Ambassador because of a change of monarchs or a change in her Foreign Office. He delivered a eulogium on Sir Charles which left nothing to be desired, and the Stuarts began to pack up.

Poor Lady Betty ! How she loved Pauline's bower ; how thoroughly she had identified her whole life with her duties as Ambassadress ; how she had revelled in her

[1] Seven months after her husband's death she gave birth to a son, who became the Duc de Chambord and the pretender to the French throne, in whose cause the Duchesse stirred up the Vendée. She was arrested and imprisoned.

station and its privileges, and how utterly miserable she was now at being deposed!

She tried to solace herself with the thought that a change would be good for the children (with perhaps an unuttered thought that it might be equally beneficial to Sir Charles); but she suffered the bitterest pangs at parting. To be obliged to yield to Lady Granville too, from whose patronizing manner she had suffered in the past, and whose shrewd sarcasms she feared; Lady Granville, whose ambition to shine in the Parisian *milieu* was well known and would probably cause all her (Lady Betty's) social triumphs to be forgotten—it was almost more than Lady Betty could bear! At least she would not wait to receive her successor; wherefore she and the children set off for England alone, her lord and master promising, reluctantly, to follow.

As for Lady Granville, no sooner had she arrived in Paris in November than she hurried round to the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré to inspect her future home. She found it, she reports, in a dilapidated condition. "Sir Charles has emptied the rooms to fill innumerable packing-cases, which are all standing about in the anterooms and passages."

She writes, however, to her sister, Lady Carlisle:

"Were you to see me in my new apartments you would not believe in me. We have a *luxe* of rooms. If the repair was equal to the space and beauty of this palace it would be perfection, but there are holes in the floor big enough to let me through, and props to keep them up. All this must be set right in the spring." [1]

[1] Later she wrote: "The Government have agreed to repair us. I think they ought to furnish us also, but *nous verrons*." This latter expense, however, the Foreign Office declined to incur.

She could hardly wait for the Stuarts' effects to be moved and haunted the Embassy every day.

"At twelve I went into the garden with my girls, who are in a state of enchantment. At two I took with Granville a delicious walk in the Champs-Elysées and returned to dress."

And again:

"I was in a transport when I walked with Sukey in the garden, looking out upon the Champs-Elysées all alive with cabriolets, horses, and foot passengers."

Lady Granville's social and housekeeping duties, unlike her husband's diplomatic ones, began at once, and while they were planning restoration and improvements of the house and looking about for temporary furnished quarters, she was already going out to dinners and receptions, and renewing her acquaintance with Parisian society. Little more than a fortnight after her arrival we find her writing:

. . . "*Private and most confidential.*[1]

"My dear.—French people are—what shall I say? what I don't like, as most comprehensive. They now show themselves to me at their best, for they are extremely civil and *prévenants*, but there is a *fonds* of ill-breeding, insolence, conceit, and pretension *qui se fait jour* through all their countenances, manners, and attentions. They are one and all factitious, and were I young, *désœuvrée*, and seeking intimacy or enjoyment amongst them, *je me perdrais*. Luckily, *je n'en ferai rien*, for they run off me like rain upon oilskin, and the only grievance is to give up a portion of every day to a society in which

[1] December 19, 1824.

I feel in every taste, feeling, and idea wholly *étrangère*. I wrap myself up in civility, but I do assure you that I turn to Miss Rumbold for a mouthful of fresh air.

"Now let me say," she goes on, "that I believe the exquisite set into which it is my good fortune to be admitted is the worst specimen of the kind. It is the pendant to the Ladies Jersey, Gwydyr, Tankerville, Mrs. Hope, etc. They begin by thinking themselves *ce qu'il y a de mieux au monde*. Their conversation is all upon dress, the Opera, Talma. There is not as much mind as would fill a pea-shell. I am told they are charmed with me. They ask me to their most intimate coteries. They, in a word, protect me, and I come from their *égards* humiliated by their kindness, oppressed by their *bienveillance*."

Amongst other qualities she found amongst the Parisians the most *outré* consideration of rank. "They will scarcely look at an Englishman or woman out of their own peculiar set; will not admit a French one who is not *à la mode*." Yet, in pure ignorance, they took up quite the wrong sort of English people.

Again, when the Ambassador's wife began calling on them, she described her reception:

"I walk in and am put on a couch. Up comes a *jeune duchesse* or an old *marquise* and gives me five minutes, such as I, to my shame, have sometimes given to a country neighbour, or some distant connection."

She was wickedly tempted to hurl the cushions at the heads of some of her hostesses when they addressed her with such phrases as "*Vous aimez Paris?*" "*Vous vous plaisez parmi nous?*" not as questions but as condescending statements of fact. "Lady *une telle est bien: on ne la soupçonnerai pas d'être anglaise.*" "*Vous avez des enfants: vous êtes bien heureuse de pouvoir les former à Paris.*"

"*J'ai passé chez vous*—with a 'think of that!' look and a hundred such—nothing in the letter, all in the spirit."

"Madame de Gontaut is delightful, but spell-bound by Courts and *élégantes*, afraid of every word she speaks and hears, and already says to me, '*Mais, ma chère, tournez-moi le dos, vous me compromettez.*'"

"But, O Lady Morpeth, it is the women made by Herbault, Victorine, and Alexandre, the Parisienne *tout à fait à la mode*," who most exasperated Lady Granville. "It is odd that their effect is to crush me with a sense of my inferiority, whilst I am absolutely gasping with the sense of my superiority." Nevertheless, she was obliged to admit that these ladies "have an aplomb, a language, a dress *de convénance* which it is impossible for me to reach, as it would be for one of them to think five minutes like a deep-thinking, deep-feeling Englishwoman."[1]

Always from the first the new Ambassadress was haunted by thoughts of her predecessor, whose social triumphs were so unquestionable; were even, a little grudgingly, conceded by Lady Granville.

"Your letter about Lady E. Stuart was as amusing to me as a new novel. I am sure, from what I hear, your account, *tant en bien qu'en mal*, is a correct one, but her faults were blessings in the past, and I could learn as a trade her defects. Save the wig, my success would be *à la longue* as unbounded as hers. I am so anxious to do well that I hope I shall, but some of my duties are difficult to me. To avoid intimacy of communication, to have a degree of repelling civility of manner, to have no preferences and create none; all this will rub my back up the wrong way, but I think over my part so much that I must end by learning it.

"I believe Lady Elizabeth at the end of ten years

[1] December 13, 1824.

was not told so often as I have been already that she was *charmante, remplie de grâce et d'esprit.* I have not time to mince the matter, but shall I at the same or half the period have everybody's good word as she has? We shall see."

One dread haunted her: Granville, though well-to-do, was an inveterate gambler. His losses at cards were often staggering. He was called "*le Napoléon des joueurs*," and once lost £23,000 at a sitting.

"My only fear is expense, and think what dress is alone! Lord Hardwicke gave Lady Elizabeth £1,000 a year, which she spent in bedecking herself."

Well, she must set her wits to work and see what could be done by her *savoir faire*, by that tact and charm in which she found herself incontestably Lady Betty's equal, if not her superior.

Thus began the famous rivalry of this pair of British Ambassadresses in Paris.

CHAPTER V

LADY GRANVILLE AND HER CIRCLE

"THE Embassy," sighed Miss Agnes Berry in a letter to her friend, Lady Hardwicke, "can never be what it was in dear Elizabeth's reign"; and yet, she conceded, "Lady Granville has been very good to us."

Lady Granville had been good to everybody, including even the female French *noblesse*, whose arrogance had at first so offended her. "You, dearest Harriet," wrote her sister in England, "you are positively indefatigable. I don't see how you can keep it up."

But previously Miss Berry had written to "dear Elizabeth's" mother:

"It is a satisfaction to hear from Mrs. Hamilton that all is going comfortably between the late and the present *Ambassade*. . . . It is agreeable also to hear that Stuart is much liked and regretted by the King, and that the King's attention to him when he received the Diplomatic Corps was much remarked." [1]

Lady Hardwicke, like her poor, deposed daughter, tried hard not to be cast down.

"I dare say," she wrote, "that something or other will be found for Sir Charles, for the King is really friendly

[1] Agnes Berry to Lady Hardwicke, January 18, 1825. Hare: *Two Noble Lives.*

to him, and either do him a kindness or (to get quit of a disagreeable subject) I think that Canning will do something, somewhere, somehow."

But Canning went to his grave without doing anything; and, moreover, George IV was by no means so friendly to Stuart as the late Ambassador's mother-in-law supposed.

The new Ambassador was presented on December 19, and Lady Granville was full of pride in her handsome husband, whom people could not help contrasting favourably with his predecessor.

"He is looking uncommonly well, and how beautiful amidst the little ugly *chétifs* Frenchmen it is not for *me* to say. I always knew what he was, body and mind, but both shine forth here like lemon-juice before the fire."

A unique simile, one would say, which would hardly have occurred to anybody but Lady Granville.

It must be admitted that the pomp then attending the reception of an Ambassador offers a striking contrast to the bare and informal ceremony of to-day.

"On Saturday morning the King, seated upon his throne, granted an audience to Lord Granville, Ambassador of His Britannic Majesty, who had the honour to present his letters of credence. Three of the King's carriages, each drawn by eight horses, were sent to the hotel of the British Embassy for the conveyance of His Excellency to the Palace of the Tuileries. The Royal carriages were followed by that of His Excellency and four of the carriages in which were eight persons attached to the Embassy. The Ambassador and suite passed into the Court of the Tuileries by the triumphal arch. His Lordship was introduced into the Royal Presence by

the Baron de Lalive, Introducer of Ambassadors, and M. de Viviers, His Majesty's Secretary for diplomatic receptions. The horses of the King's carriages were driven by grooms of the Royal stables. After his audience by the King, Lord Granville was received by the Dauphin, the Dauphiness, and the Duchess of Berry. His Excellency returned to the Hall of the Ambassadors, and from there was conveyed to his hotel with the same ceremony. At the arrival and departure of His Lordship the guard on duty at the Château rendered him military honours with arms presented and drums beating.[1]

The activities of the Granvilles, as we have seen, began early. Already the Duke of Wellington, "looking thin but well," had dined with them, and shortly afterwards along came another illustrious visitor, Prince Leopold, the widowed husband of Princess Charlotte, heiress to the British throne. Her record (December 28, 1824) of the event is amusingly characteristic :

"Leopold has arrived. He dined here yesterday. Sat till half-past nine. He remains a fortnight. *Heavy work!*"

It was hard to keep track of all their engagements—"drums to go to every day—four or five *soirées* a night"—for invitations were sometimes addressed to the Ambassador, sometimes to his lady. And this practice on one occasion resulted in a terrible contretemps.

Granville, in the midst of one of his most hurried mornings, received a note of invitation from a Court official at which he only glanced perfunctorily. Both he and his lady were engaged on the evening concerned ; but he forgot to request his secretary, Mr. Jones, to send an excuse, or else the harassed Jones forgot.

[1] *Galignani's Messenger*, December 20, 1824.

THE BRITISH EMBASSY, PARIS.
(*Circa* 1830.)

To face p. 76.

The dinner, arranged by the King himself, comprised Prince Leopold and *all* the diplomats! They waited dinner till 7.30. Of course there was "the devil to pay" —Madame in a fury—all the Court righteously indignant.

Meanwhile, Lady Granville had sallied forth to a private *soirée* ignorant of the crime which had been so unwittingly committed. The Ambassador went off to play cards. For the next three days there were multitudinous notes, visits, and apologies to the Royal circle at the Tuileries.

Amongst the Duke of Wellington's numerous female friends was a beautiful American widow, sister-in-law of the lady who had married Jérôme Bonaparte. This Mrs. Patterson was in Paris, and the Duke entreated Lady Granville to call upon her. She did so.

"Mrs. Patterson seems a very charming person, very handsome, with *l'air noble*, and not a shade of her mother-country. She shook all over when I went into the room, but," declares the Ambassadress in sprightly fashion, "if for grief at the loss of Mr. Patterson, sentiment at the recollection of the Duke, or the coldness of the room she received me in, I do not presume to judge."

This lady subsequently married the Duke's brother, the Marquess Wellesley.

It was a great disappointment to both the Granvilles that the Embassy should just then be in the hands of the workmen, which prevented her from giving any large parties to members of the English Colony.[1] Meanwhile

[1] "I have as yet done nothing for them. The *délabré* and unfurnished state of the house does not admit of great receptions, and the fear of receiving the many keeps me from receiving the few."—January 26, 1825.

the Granvilles had found pleasant quarters in the Hôtel d'Eckmuhl.

"The comfort and delight of being *chez nous* in this delicious house—everything clean and warm—is not to be described."

Nevertheless, Lady Granville was constantly flitting over to the Embassy to superintend the reparations, and during the ensuing spring was a very happy woman, a happiness due to "house, garden, my husband, my children, the clear, exhilarating climate, the animating gaiety of all out-of-doors *spectacles*, and the endless amusement and variety of the theatres—Pasta alone is a happiness." All this more than made up to her for "occasional vexation and weariness of spirit."

She found everything "as quiet as the depth of the country, not a sound to be heard." On post days she instructed the lodge-keeper that she was out—"a proceeding thoroughly understood. They think a great deal of *expédier le courrier*"—and she thus was granted many hours of solitude.

In spite of his incurable gambling proclivities, Granville seems to have been a most sweet-tempered man. Once, when seven out of his nine horses perished crossing the Channel, his wife wrote :

"He is quite adorable ; for it is a trial of temper, patience, and cheerfulness—neither of which fails him for a moment."

She is for ever making notes of her new social surroundings.

"The fault of the most agreeable women here is the want of nature. They make phrases ; they have a look

of being after their thoughts. They have little mock wars of words. *Elles se querellent amicablement*—compliment ditto. One feels sure they settle one day what they shall say the next. In short, when they are being clever I feel a sort of proud wish to be stupid."

And again :

"I am every day more convinced that any amalgamation of French and English in society is impossible.

"The French show no *prévenance*. The English are not paid for it, like me."

What she sought to avoid most was what she called the "*representation or insolence of an Ambassadress.*" [1]

She thought the mistake was "in thinking that diplomacy is sentiment, and that the representative of a nation is to find Paris overflowing with sentiment, and rushing into its arms without bribe or reward." Whatever success came to her she was convinced would have to be earned.

She is constantly meeting odd types. One was a Madame de Talaru (formerly Madame de Clermont Tonnerre), who "saw her first husband massacred before her eyes during the Revolution. She is near eighty, and has piqued herself upon always remaining in the costume of her youth. Well, my dear, she is now the model of the *present* fashion—*crêpée*, an immense toque on her head, a stomacher waist and a blond ruff. How she must laugh in her large sleeves !"

[1] She had written the year before of Lord Clancarty, the Ambassador at Brussels, that he was "a bustling, hard man, evidently galled at giving up the Embassy, but civil. She, an excellent headaching woman, with none of the *representation or insolence of an Ambassadress.*"

There was also a queer old Countess Rumford, wife of the remarkable American who had been created Count Rumford, who invariably went to sleep and snored loudly in her box at the Opera. For this some cruel wit called her the Comtesse *Ronflefort*.

In June 1825 Granville attended at the French Court in order to receive at the hands of the new French Sovereign the Knighthood of the Bath, which had been awarded him by George IV. On that occasion Charles X wore the English Order of the Garter. Sometimes, in the midst of her strenuous life, Lady Granville has a "fear that she is becoming frivolous." She is, however, "not wholly discontented with herself, because she never taught her children so much nor so regularly as since she has been in Paris." Religious thoughts steal over her, even when she and the Ambassador and their children are not (as they always were) in their place in the Embassy Chapel on Sundays, listening to the chaplain or some visiting clergyman.

At that time the only English Chapel in Paris was the ball-room or the dining-room of the Embassy, where Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Luscombe held forth.[1] Afterwards the Marbœuf Chapel in the Champs-Elysées was opened, and at a much later time there was built the little church in the Rue d'Aguesseau, close at hand. There were frequent visiting preachers of note.

"I went this morning," writes her ladyship, "to hear Lewis Wray preach. His sermons are extempore, he is evangelical and very striking and impressive. The English flock there. If anybody whispers, he stops and says, 'When Lady Such-an-one has done talking I will pro-

[1] It was Luscombe who, a dozen years later, married W. M. Thackeray and Miss Shawe at the Embassy.

ceed.' His sermon began to-day with a little warning to those delegated by their sovereign to represent him to take heed of their conduct and conversation."

But neither the Ambassador nor his wife felt that they had any need for such open admonition.

At another time Lady Granville writes (August 1, 1825) to Lady Carlisle :

"I have begun reading the Bible with notes regularly. I always liked what is called serious reading, to me so much more light in hand than much that is called lively.

"The Scriptures and prayer give to one's feelings warmth and life. It is such a mistake to think that religion is a damper of happiness."

In the case of a famous Canon of St. Paul's religion was certainly no damper of humour.

"Sydney Smith came and preached a most beautiful, eloquent sermon this morning to a crowded, alas! dining-room. I like him better so than when in society. He is, as Mr. Sneyd says, something between Cato and Punch. You must allow that this describes his physique admirably."

But when the witty and corpulent Canon preached his sermon the Embassy had been renovated, the Chancellery wing adapted, and many of the features which distinguish it to-day had been added—amongst them the three carved cherubs over the portal, representing England, Scotland, and Ireland, as well as the British coats-of-arms at the garden entrance, opposite the Champs-Elysées.

"My house, which was opened last night with a dinner of forty-four English, looks more brilliant and enormous than I can describe. [For the ball] I have asked 1,150, but . . . have no fear of a crowd. We open the *rez-de-chaussée*—the *serre* with a carpet doubled of scarlet cloth, eighteen lustres with lamps and six divans, with all the doors and windows taken off in the ball- and drawing-rooms."

She had heard that certain French people at her ball turned from a quadrille in disgust if it happened to include any English.

"'*Ah, mon Dieu, il y a des Anglaises.*' The fact is that the butter is spread *à fonds* with hatred and jealousy towards *nous autres*, and then *we* meet it with an undue degree of *hauteur* and coldness."

Once, a Madame Charlemont attended one of the Embassy *soirées*. When the butler asked her name, this lady, thinking it English *de se faire annoncer*, remarked, "*N'importe.*" But the butler was not to be put off. He insisted: she stuck to her "*N'importe!*" Whereupon he threw open the door and bawled,

"*Madame n'Importe!*"

Royalty, however, from some reason or other, stayed away. Lady Granville heard that the King wished the Duchesse de Berri not to go beyond the Tuileries; perhaps the others were still loyal to the memory of Lady Elizabeth Stuart. But the success was so great that Lady Granville could afford to be unconcerned.

"People talk of nothing but me and my *soirées* to me; but I never believe what they say. I admire my house and not myself, so I am still less credulous about the latter than the former.

"My Fridays," she avows, "worry me. On the last, numbers of French came without invitation, and I hear they intend coming every Friday in the year. My house will be like a bear-garden. Granville says, 'Never mind.' The English are *angels*. They never come unasked, and charmed when they are, and such dears!" [1]

But these afternoons and evenings at the Embassy were not entirely given up to feasting and dancing. The three *amours* adorning the façade, which so intrigued M. Pasquier that he stood gazing at them for five minutes in astonishment, were not without significance. This splendid mansion was not *le nid de Pauline* for nothing. Even mature people could not resist the charm of the precincts, especially the garden. Once Lady Granville records:

"The Berrys came, and they—Mary and Granville—sat in the moonlight till past ten like a pair of lovers."

She was an inveterate match-maker. During the three years of her first term as Ambassadress a vast amount of love-making went on under her indulgent eye. First it had been the pretty Lady Mary Fox, whom she wished might be wooed and won by one of the attachés. These attachés, by the by, were her constant concern. Their characters were all different, but she loved them all. The First Secretary was the Hon. Algernon Percy, "a sickly, gentleman-like man, who understands dress and paints miniatures." Then there was "young Bligh, good-natured and civil." Her greatest trial was with Abercromby, whom she exerted herself to please and to provide with pretty dinner and dancing partners, but utterly without

[1] Lady Granville once actually greeted a French lady with, "*Toujours enchantée de vous voir, invitées ou pas invitée!*"

effect. The Ambassador had also treated the young man kindly. Nevertheless, for months past Abercromby's manner remained "cold, ungracious, and reserved. He has absented himself from my evening society, the only mark of personal attention which in my *genre de vie* an attaché can give me. I loved him almost as a son."

The trouble turned out to be Abercromby's desire to rise in the service, and his unfounded belief that the Ambassador was purposely keeping him in Paris when he might have been earlier transferred to his advantage.

It was all duly explained in a heart-to-heart talk, and the young diplomat promised to correct his sulky behaviour.

Perhaps Lady Granville's greatest triumph was the engagement of Lord Clanrickarde to the lovely Mary Canning. They had first met under her roof, and she had watched the progress of a mutual passion for weeks.

"Lord Clanrickarde proposed and was accepted yesterday evening," she writes. "I never saw any two people look so happy and radiant as they both did during the decisive conversation."

Later she records rapturously :

"Lord Clanrickarde and Miss Canning are the people I envy. They send excuses everywhere, and sit cooing in my drawing-room *tant que le jour dure.*"

At this time Lady Granville's own charming daughters were too young for marriage. When her clever son, Leveson (afterwards the second Earl Granville and Foreign Minister), was over for the holidays, he frequently played with his schoolboy friend, the future Duke of Hamilton, in the Embassy garden and in the Champs-

Elysées. The two lads afterwards recalled how they took daily lessons in circus-riding from the famous clowns, the Auriols, in the great circus of the Champs-Elysées, so dear to the heart of juvenile Paris.

And so with her duties, her family, and her friends time passed pleasantly enough at the Embassy for Lady Granville.

"If I were to die at the end of my first year I should be handed down to posterity as an exemplary Ambassadress; but if I live, as I trust I shall, to give time to the natural faults of my character to come out, I tremble for my good name."

It is certain, as has been seen, that Lady Granville was no saint (as her daughter, the Evangelical Lady Georgiana afterwards became), and in her encounters with certain eminent English ladies, notably Lady Jersey, who from her excessive talkativeness was denominated "Silence" in the Granville inner circle, she could at times be almost shrewish.

"I am glad I have done 'Silence' good. I think if her friends would be stout and leave off toadying her, and above all say to her the quarter of what they think of her, she *might* be a *very decent old woman.*"

There ensued an open Granville-Jersey quarrel, but it was eventually patched up. Then came a tragic episode at the Embassy which agitated the whole household. Lady Granville thus describes it:

"A robber got into the garden, rushed on the guard, and in the struggle was killed. I was alone, and heard the gun and the cries just under my window. It was terrible to be so near this work of death, and I had fears

of the guard having been precipitate, and the man perhaps coming to the house for other purposes—as he was well dressed, with books and verses signed with his name, and a letter to ' Caroline ' in his pocket, unarmed and no instruments for robbery. My relief was consequently great in finding that he has been recognized as a notorious robber by the police, *condamné à mort* four months ago, and searched for in vain ever since."

Such was the police explanation, but it is to be feared that it was a case of mistaken identity, and an innocent but imprudent man had been killed.

For Lord Granville, in October 1825, there had been a curious official interlude in the arrival of the Duke of Northumberland as special Ambassador to the Coronation of King Charles X. It was, as events proved, a needless and expensive gesture on the part of the English monarch, George IV ; and the Granvilles secretly resented it. Then, nearly two years later, August 10, 1827, Granville had news of his friend, George Canning's, death. This event both he and his wife could not help regarding as a calamity, not only for themselves but for the British nation. At all events they could hardly hope to retain the Embassy under his successor, and although they had some sort of official assurance in " an amiable letter from Lord Dudley," they felt they " cannot count upon " that transient Minister, and Granville was greatly depressed. Yet the blow did not fall for a twelvemonth.

When the Duke of Wellington's Ministry was formed, Lady Granville wrote :

" Of our plans we have, of course, scarcely had time to think. The *mappemonde* floats before my eyes. I am glad that the moment of hurry and bustle is one of *relâche* as to fashionable life, that Paris is beginning to empty and will soon be quite deserted."

Then later :

" I have begun the great task of paying bills, burning and settling papers."

Granville took his dispatches and private letters telling of the great political changes in England into the Embassy garden, and read them " beneath the conscious moon, the garden bright with lamps and sweet with orange flowers."

But it was hard to sweeten the fact that they must go, and that the King had already agreed to the reappointment of Sir Charles Stuart, now created Lord Stuart de Rothesay.

But by July 7, 1828, no *congé* had arrived from Aberdeen—or any official announcement of Lord Stuart's appointment. However, " that diligent young lord has written himself to say that he shall be here in a fortnight."

Lady Granville adds :

" Granville is very sorry, but sorry like an honest-minded man—no repining, no irritation. He stands by his own conduct, without one shade of bitterness or unfairness. In short, I think more highly of him than of any human being—happiness enough for any woman."

CHAPTER VI

STUART DE ROTHESAY

IT was no longer *le chevalier* Stuart (as the French invariably called him), but Lord Stuart de Rothesay, who came back once more to the Embassy in July 1828. If he was filled with satisfaction at returning to the diplomatic scene (for as to Paris itself he can hardly be said to have torn himself away), how much deeper was the gratification and triumph of his wife, for whom the past three years had been exile indeed ! Moreover, her little daughters, Charlotte and Louisa (whom Charles X called *mes petites sujettes*), were " delighted to see again the old hotel," and with them came their devoted governess, Miss Hyriott. All were in raptures over the renovated house and garden ; but Lady Stuart's shrewd eye fell on many details, especially of furniture, introduced by her predecessor, Lady Granville, of which she altogether failed to approve. This occasioned a little unpleasantness ; for when Lord Granville, in accordance with custom, sent in a bill for furniture and fittings, Stuart declined to pay, saying that he did not require effects which he had not himself selected. It was very awkward. Granville complained to Lord Aberdeen, the new Foreign Secretary, who advised Stuart to settle. The Ambassador reluctantly did so, but declared that he would not have the Granville sticks, chairs, carpets, curtains, and what not, incontinently bundling them off the premises to be disposed of at auction—a proceeding

which was, of course, severely criticized by all the partisans of the Granvilles.

That was not all. Lady Stuart was quickly made aware that, although her return to the Embassy was hailed warmly by her old friends, especially the *noblesse* of the Faubourg, there was a distinct atmosphere of, not precisely hostility, but of coolness at Court, and in certain quarters of Parisian society, towards her husband. Lord Palmerston, who came over on a visit, put it in his characteristic blunt way when he wrote (January 23, 1829) :

" Lord Stuart has not succeeded since his return here. When he went people all thought him gone for good, and out came all sorts of stories about him ; and those who had made free with his name are shy of his society. He behaved very shabbily about Lord Granville's furniture." [1]

There was also another wretched business thus discreetly touched upon by young Lord Normanby, long afterwards himself Ambassador :

" It is very often allowed to English residents or visitors abroad to have their letters conveyed home in the bag containing the dispatches of the Ambassador, thereby escaping the expense, but more especially the prying eyes of the sovereign police. Some letters had appeared in the London *Chronicle* bitterly inveighing against French Ministers and evidently written in Paris. How could they have been conveyed ? Evidently through the Ambassador. The servant whose business it was to receive these letters for the said bag was corrupted,

[1] Charles Greville also wrote : " Lord Stuart de Rothesay is sent back to Paris, though personally obnoxious to the King and universally disliked."—*Memoirs*, vol. i.

it is said, and at the same time instructed how to get at their contents without injuring or destroying the letters; and it was stipulated that he should furnish copies of them regularly to the police.

"The bribed servant found this employment of his not only gainful but amusing. The political epistles, indeed, which his suborners were chiefly interested in, had few charms for him; some of the private ones, replete with malice and with scandal, had; the rascal took copies not only for the police but duplicate copies for himself.

"The worthy English residents never dreamed of the honour and immortality threatened to their correspondence until the faithless servant was discovered in his iniquity and discharged.

"However, the man was soon in want, and had recourse to a certain lord ('gay and dissipated') in Paris, offering proofs that his correspondence had been copied, and threatening to send it to the printer unless he were paid a certain sum. Soon afterwards, however, he mysteriously vanished and was no more heard of."[1]

The incident created a diplomatic scandal and still further lowered the prestige of Lord Stuart.

Accordingly, Lady Betty felt that, under the circumstances, a special effort at the propitiation of Parisian society was required, and resolved to celebrate their return by a costume ball on an unparalleled scale of splendour. It was to be a revival of the beautiful fêtes of the Renaissance, the characters of which should be Marie Stuart and her Court. The Ambassadress would dearly have liked to have taken the rôle of the young Queen herself, despite her ripening matronhood; but this rôle she prudently offered to her royal friend, the Duchesse de Berri, while the Duc de Chartres promised to attend as Francis I.

[1] Normanby: *France and the French*, 1828.

BALL AT THE BRITISH EMBASSY, 1825.
(From the drawing by Eugène Lamy.)

To face p. 90.

This Embassy ball was given on March 2, 1829, and was a very notable success. It was attended by nearly the whole of the royalty and aristocracy then in Paris, and its magnificence was remembered for many a day. Indeed, it is doubtful if it has ever been eclipsed by any function ever given at the Embassy, where the tendency has been, at least in our time, to restrict large and costly entertainments, doubtless for fear of instituting invidious comparisons of national opulence in the French mind. The talented artist, Eugène Lamy, executed a series of beautiful designs of the Marie Stuart ball, afterwards engraved, one of which represents Lady Stuart de Rothesay as the Queen-Mother in the act of ascending the crowded Embassy staircase.

Strange turn of Fortune's wheel! In the very next year the Duchesse de Berri, herself a hunted exile from France, took refuge in Holyrood, the palace of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots!

For the moment the Stuarts had succeeded in restoring their popularity. Lady Blessington, who had arrived in Paris and taken a furnished hotel in the Faubourg, records after a dinner at the Embassy:

"Lord Stuart de Rothesay is very popular at Paris, as is also our Ambassadress: a proof that, in addition to a vast fund of good nature, no inconsiderable portion of tact is conjoined. To please English and French, too, which they certainly do, requires no little degree of the rare talent of *savoir vivre.*

"To a profound knowledge of French society and its peculiarities, a knowledge not easy acquired, Lord and Lady Stuart de Rothesay add the happy art of adapting all that is agreeable in its usages, without sacrificing any of the stateliness so essential in the representatives of our more grave and reflecting nation."

Certainly a very handsome tribute, even though Lady Blessington's journal *An Idler in France,* in which it appears, did not see the light until years after the Stuarts had departed.

Stuart de Rothesay had hardly got seated at his desk and again gathered up the political threads, when he became aware of symptoms of coming storm. He distrusted the permanence of Charles X's tenure of his throne, and he distrusted the policy of his Minister, M. de Polignac. He saw, as Lord Palmerston did, and his official chief, Aberdeen, ought to have seen, the precise character of the step which would surely precipitate a revolution. Of the men most versed in foreign affairs in whose hands the destiny of France might eventually fall, he thought that, after Talleyrand, the chances of Sebastiani were as good as any. During his own visit Palmerston, however, does not appear to have been impressed by Sebastiani, whom he met at a dinner at the Comte de Flahauts, also attended by Stuart and Talleyrand. A private letter of Palmerston's gives an example of the sort of political conversation which went on at Parisian dinner tables on the eve of the Revolution of 1830. Talleyrand, he thought, "seems sunken and broken and said but little," while Sebastiani, "a self-sufficient, consequential coxcomb,"

"maintained in a loud voice and a declamatory style that it is of great importance to a country to have a large capital town, as it tends to create a public opinion and to advance the political freedom of the State; that Paris is not large enough, and ought to be *forced*; that the best mode of doing this would be to exempt from taxation for fifteen or twenty years all houses that should be built from this time for a certain period to come; he not perceiving that a large capital town

may be a good political establishment when it results from the activity of commerce, and arises spontaneously; but that an aggregation of stone and mortar is different from an aggregation of thinking beings."

After dinner Sebastiani did Palmerston

"the honour to tell me *avec franchise* that it is a thousand pities that all parties and Government in England take so mistaken a view of the principle on which we ought to deal with France. It is essential and indispensable to France to get back the Rhine as a frontier; Landau and Sarre-Louis are particularly necessary to her. So long as the policy of England is opposed to these resumptions, so long it will be impossible for any cordial alliance to exist between England and France; and France, whose real interests lie in a connection with England, will be led rather to seek to unite herself with Russia and Prussia, or any other Power that will aid her to accomplish these objects. Prussia—though at first sight interested to prevent these resumptions by France—might be bribed to acquiescence by slices from Austria or Saxony, or by Hanover."

The English statesman drily expressed great doubt

"whether any party would be found in England sufficiently enlightened to see this matter in this point of view, and thought it would be very difficult to persuade the people to such an arrangement."

On the whole Palmerston's opinion in 1829 was that

"France is prospering and wants only peace to become powerful. The interest on her debt is only seven millions sterling, and her sinking fund for redemption of debt is three millions sterling. Her taxes are light and her people happy."[1]

[1] Bulwer: *Life of Lord Palmerston.*

If France really wanted a free and honest Government she could hardly have had a better one than she actually enjoyed under the restored Bourbon monarchy. This was the opinion at least of another observer, Prince Leopold. If the Bourbons were unpopular it was because the French resented the Treaty imposed upon them by the Allies after Waterloo. Yet France had really been robbed of nothing. She had the same frontiers as in 1789, only her people believed they were entitled to what was called the natural frontiers—" the sea, the Rhine, and the Pyrenees."

Palmerston thought all the troubles would be " settled in an amiable manner, and there is no earthly possibility, or rather probability, of revolution or convulsion," *unless, of course,* the King and his Ministers were obstinate enough and mad enough to defy national opinion. " In that case the result would probably be a change of name of the inhabitant of the Tuileries, and the Duke of Orléans might be invited to step over from the Palais Royal."

This is, indeed, a striking instance of Palmerston's prescience.

In the following year there came a change of name of the British monarch. In June 1830 George IV died, and a month later in Paris the Revolution of 1830 broke out. Although there was then no Bonapartist party, the Bonapartist spirit was rife in France. Everywhere was manifested a common hatred of the Bourbons. The military and the democrats, in their Masonic and *Carbonari* lodges, always asserted that the Bourbons were responsible for the misfortunes of 1814 and 1815.

What the mass of the revolutionaries wanted was a republic. After three days' fighting no one heard any

mention of Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orléans. The Liberal deputies would have been content to make peace with the King if Polignac and his Ministers were dismissed. The Extremists had no definite plan.

" Every day in Paris," wrote Agnes Berry, " becomes more serious and terrible. . . . We heard the awful sound of the cannon in the last stand that the King's troops under Marmont made in the Champs-Elysées. . . . Even then, in such moments, did the poor, infatuated King refuse all terms, till the dust of his flying troops, followed by a justly incensed people, was seen from the windows of St.-Cloud, and they told him he had not a quarter of an hour left *pour prendre son parti*. In fact, his cause is up and lost for ever. . . . No accounts you can see are more horrible than the dreadful state that Paris has been in, and the complete butchery of the poor Swiss and French Guards, in their ill-directed loyalty, is enough to make one's blood run cold."

And all this had been effected in a week, after the infatuated King, aided by his Ministers, had proclaimed the Ordonnances which suspended the liberty of the Press, dissolved the Chamber of Deputies, and created a new electoral system !

On July 30 Louis Philippe was moved to invoke the advice of Lord Stuart, who urged him to remain at Neuilly and do all in his power to restore order. When, later, the Duc again applied to Stuart, it was thought proper that he should be answered by all the Ambassadors jointly.

" The Duke's nomination to the Lieutenant-Generalship," wrote Stuart, " was the only solution of the

question. Otherwise the Hôtel de Ville party would have gained the upper hand."

One morning Stuart learnt of the placard put up overnight by Laffitte and Thiers, a clever and then little-known young journalist.

This placard set forth that a republic would entail both internal strife and war abroad. It was admitted that Charles X, having shed the blood of his people, was unworthy to retain the crown. But—it went on—there existed a Prince who was devoted to the cause of the Revolution, and this Prince was Louis Philippe, Duc d'Orléans.

This placard made an immediate impression upon the Liberal deputies and the middle classes. But the recalcitrant and violent Hôtel de Ville party were indignant at the idea of "another Bourbon" culling the fruits of their glorious victory. They called on Lafayette to declare a republic, of which he was to be president. Lafayette shrank from this, but Remusat and some of his colleagues, and also W. C. Rives, the American Minister, adroitly flattered him into playing the rôle of founder of a Liberal monarchy.

On July 31, therefore, Lafayette agreed to receive the Duc d'Orléans in the Place de Grève. Ten days later the Duke, having sworn fidelity to the Charter in the Chamber of Deputies, was proclaimed Louis Philippe, King of the French, while his deposed relative crept away to England to die. The new monarch was in his fifty-fourth year.

Now, in England the Duke of Wellington, who had been chiefly instrumental in restoring the Bourbons, was too well acquainted with the French not to know that the triumph of the extremists was a menace to Europe.

But he was far from being on confidential terms with Polignac, as people supposed, and the recent French expedition to Algiers had strained the Anglo-French relations.

Wellington, therefore, promptly advised King William IV to acknowledge Louis Philippe, and in Lord Stuart de Rothesay's temporary absence Hamilton, the Chargé d'Affaires, was instructed to pay his official respects to the new Court.

"The English are very popular in Paris at this moment," recorded Lady Blessington, "and the ready recognition of Louis Philippe by our Government has increased this good feeling. A vast crowd escorted the carriage of Mr. Hamilton, the Secretary of the Embassy, to his door as he returned from his first accredited audience of the new monarch, and cries of '*Vivent les Anglais!*' filled the air."

It is wonderful how this fervent cry of "*Vivent les Anglais!*" was to alternate throughout the ensuing century with its distressing complement "*A bas les Anglais!*"

As the outbreak had happened during their summer holiday the Stuarts had been spared the worst features of the Revolution, but Stuart himself was soon back at the Embassy, and the first of the foreign Ambassadors to attend in state at the Tuileries.

For the moment, indeed, it was not known what the attitude of the other foreign Courts would be. Stuart heard that the Tsar Nicolas, although detesting the Revolution, did not propose to attack France. He directed his Ambassador "to remain in Paris, but to remove immediately from the house furnished to the Russian Embassy by the Government of France." He was, moreover, to hold

himself in readiness to quit Paris at an hour's notice, and to leave instantly should the English, the Prussian, the Austrian, or the Dutch Ambassador be compelled to depart. The Duc d'Orléans was to the Tsar simply a usurper ; but he would not intervene unless France tried to disseminate revolutionary doctrines in other countries, or to carry her arms beyond her frontiers. Later, although he regretted the British Government had been so precipitate in recognizing Louis Philippe, the Russian autocrat found it prudent to follow the same course.

But by this time the centre of European interest had shifted from Paris beyond the northern frontiers of France. Belgium, which since 1815 had been a part of the kingdom of the Netherlands, decided to strike a blow for independence.

The July Revolution gave the Belgians an incentive to revolt, and the following month saw a violent outbreak of rioting in Brussels, quickly followed by the formation of a Provisional Government, and the declaration of Belgium's independence.

These proceedings naturally produced great satisfaction in Paris, where anything to do with the Treaties of 1815 was cordially hated. France was on the side of Belgium, and it might be that here was a capital opportunity for restoring the old French frontiers in the north. The old King of the Netherlands appealed to the Powers. Louis Philippe recognized at once the hopelessness of French intervention : the most he could do would be to demand that the Powers should imitate his example and leave the people of the Netherlands to work out their own salvation. As a preliminary gesture to England he decided to call out the veteran Talleyrand from his retirement. Talleyrand was known

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to be pacific, he was one of the most striking combinations of the Liberal and Monarchist, democrat and aristocrat that the age had produced: his whole life had been a series of dramatic metamorphoses. Talleyrand was accordingly sent as Ambassador to London.

In announcing to the Powers that in future French policy in Belgium and elsewhere would be based strictly upon the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries, Louis Philippe and Count Molé, his first Foreign Minister, could hardly have expected to win the full approval of Russia, Prussia, and Austria. In the first place, Frederick William of Prussia was the King of the Netherlands' brother-in-law, and he thought he was only performing a fraternal duty in moving a few thousand troops towards the Rhine and the Belgian frontier. When news of this mobilization reached Paris, Molé took a very definite step. The Prussian Ambassador was in Paris, but without official credentials. He was asked to meet the Foreign Minister at a private house, and was there informed that if a Prussian army crossed the Netherlands frontier his master would consider it an act of war against France. Angry as Frederick William was at this piece of "French insolence," he decided not to run the risk, and the movement of the troops was stopped.

At the British Embassy, Lord Stuart was inclined to agree with the Duke of Wellington in regarding the Belgian outbreak as a "devilish bad business," and one which might easily precipitate a general European war. In Paris there was much excitement. The Society of the Friends of the People recruited and armed a battalion to march to the assistance of their Belgian brothers. Appeals were published in the newspapers for

more men and money for the Belgian cause. But everywhere there was unrest and violence, and the revolutionary agents of every country, but especially Spain and Italy, made Paris—and in particular the house of the ultra-Liberal, Lafayette—their headquarters. The annexation of Belgium was the new battle-cry.

Then there was Spain. Stuart suspected that the French Government were conniving at the proceedings of the Spanish revolutionaries, but Molé denied it.[1] Nevertheless, it was true that they deemed the occasion ripe to put a little pressure upon the Spanish monarch, who had so far neglected to acknowledge the Emperor of the French, by exciting his fears. The permission given to the Spanish revolutionaries to forgather on the French frontier had its due effect, and the Spanish Minister to Paris received his credentials before the month of October was out.

It was now agreed by the Powers to adopt the British proposal and hold a conference on the affairs of Belgium. Where should the plenipotentiaries meet? Naturally London, where the conference on Greece had just met, seemed the most suitable capital. But Molé insisted on it being held in Paris. When the Duke heard of the suggestion, he cried "*Impossible!*" It was a *terrain trop agité*—it was absurd to think of discussing the affairs of the Low Countries amidst the *tourbillon révolutionnaire* of the French capital. If the discussions were to be held in London the plenipotentiaries might agree to the Anglo-French proposals without question, but in Paris they would be suspicious and insist on referring every difference to their respective Courts. Nevertheless, Molé continued to urge his objections against London. Stuart de Rothesay was puzzled at

[1] Stuart to Aberdeen (October 1, 8, 11, 1830).

his persistence. At last the mystery was explained. It was due to the presence in London of Talleyrand. Talleyrand was anathema to the ultra-Liberals—they had resented his appointment as Ambassador to London. If he represented France at the forthcoming conference he would expose his own Government to a fatal attack from its enemies. Did Lord Aberdeen wish him (Molé) and perhaps his Royal master to fall ?

" This extraordinary reason for objecting to our proposition," wrote Aberdeen bluntly to Stuart, " does not appear to His Majesty's Government to be entitled to serious consideration."

Molé thought otherwise. He saw Lord Stuart several times. He threatened, if the British Ministry persisted, to send a second plenipotentiary to London, as associate to Prince Talleyrand.

Whatever lengths Molé might have gone, or precisely what his motives were, further proceedings in that direction were cut short by the breaking out of political riots in Paris (which only confirmed the fears which had been entertained by Wellington) and a rearrangement of the Cabinet on more Liberal lines. The Conservative members, Broglie, Molé, Guizot, and Casimir Périer, resigned. Laffitte was charged with the forming of a new Ministry.

At this very time Wellington's own Ministry in England was tottering. Parliament had opened on November 2 with a Speech from the Throne in which the Belgians were characteristically described as " revolted subjects." The Ministry promised that political disturbances at home would be sternly repressed. A fortnight later the Duke spoke out boldly against Reform ; he was, of course, beaten. On his resignation Earl Grey became Prime Minister.

Such a general shuffling of the political cards in London naturally involved a change in the Ambassadorship at Paris.

Yet never since he had succeeded Wellington in 1815 had Stuart had more affairs of moment on his hands ; and, to his credit be it said, he was managing them dexterously.

" Palmerston is in, my dear, and we are out." Thus did the Ambassador break the news to his wife. For a second time, after less than two years' tenancy of the Embassy, they were to be deposed. Poor Lady Betty hoped it might not be the Granvilles again ; but it was hoping against hope—the Granvilles it had to be, and the Stuarts were given only a brief respite until the end of the year.

Notwithstanding the political changes in Paris, which brought Sebastiani to the Foreign Office, the veteran Talleyrand remained at his post in London.

" England," he wrote from thence, " is the country with which France should cultivate the most friendly relations. Her colonial losses have removed a source of rivalry between them. The Powers still believe in the divine right of Kings : France and England are alone in no longer subscribing to that doctrine. Both Governments have adopted the principle of non-intervention. Let both now declare loudly that they alone are resolved to maintain peace, and their voices will not be raised in vain."

On the face of it, it really seemed an auspicious moment in which to inaugurate a new era in Europe. Conditions in France and England bore many points of resemblance. The Revolution in France had reacted on England as it had reacted elsewhere. It had precipitated

the triumph of the Whigs. Both countries had new rulers; in spite of profound differences in character, both of these rulers were simple-minded men of Liberal tendencies, who had succeeded sovereigns of the eighteenth-century school.

The two statesmen who were to achieve such an *Entente Cordiale* were Lord Palmerston and General Sebastiani. Palmerston's opinion of Sebastiani has already been given. It is not surprising that Lord Stuart de Rothesay had no great confidence in either.

Palmerston was now forty-five; he had been a Tory for seventeen years before he seceded in 1828 with the other followers of Canning. Although he now called himself a Whig, he was no member of the Holland House set. He had not become infected with any form of revolutionary doctrine. When he visited Paris in 1829 he had met most of the French Liberal leaders, and saw plainly that they all cherished a deep resentment against the Treaties of 1815, and only awaited an opportunity to re-enlarge French frontiers to the Rhine. None had been bitterer than Sebastiani, and this man was now Louis Philippe's Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Moreover, when the settlement of the Belgian question demanded the full attention of all the Powers, there arose increasing unrest and trouble in Saxony and other German States, and on November 28 an insurrection burst forth in Poland, which Frenchmen hailed with enthusiasm. Excited meetings were held and resolutions of sympathy passed for the "Frenchmen of the North," as the Poles were called.

"All this excitement," reported Lord Stuart, "comes at a useful time for Louis Philippe and his Ministry.

It distracts popular attention from another subject from which they fear serious trouble."

This other subject was the trial of Polignac and his three colleagues who had signed the July ordinances and were under arrest. The mob called loudly for their execution, but the King was resolved to spare them. When, therefore, on December 21, the peers found them guilty of high treason, they were sentenced only to perpetual confinement, and hurried back safely to Vincennes out of the clutches of an angry mob.

It was not surprising that England was charged with having saved Polignac from the guillotine or the gibbet. Lafayette himself was supposed to be involved in this act of mercy: but, whether too zealous or not zealous enough as Commander of the National Guard, he now took offence and resigned his post. Stuart wrote Palmerston that he thought this might be fraught with grave consequences, but nothing happened. The Ministry appointed Lafayette's successor, and the fickle populace abandoned their hero.

Meanwhile, the Belgian Conference had been convened in London and an armistice proclaimed in the Netherlands. All along it was felt that if Belgium was to be declared an independent kingdom the problem of choosing a king was one which bristled with difficulties. Stuart had been told confidentially by Molé before his resignation that the Provisional Government in Brussels wished to put one of Louis Philippe's sons on the throne. The answer was that, as France was about to enter a conference with the other Powers, such a proposal could not be entertained for a moment. Of course the obvious candidate was the heir to the Dutch throne, the Prince of Orange, who had always been popular in Belgium. But after the Dutch bombardment

of Antwerp he became impossible, and on November 24 the National Congress in Brussels decreed the exclusion of all members of the House of Orange-Nassau. An agent was sent to London to sound Talleyrand and others as to whether the Duc de Leuchtenberg would be acceptable. This young man was a son of Eugène de Beauharnais, and consequently a Bonaparte. To enthrone any member of the Bonaparte family would be, in Louis Philippe's opinion, to put his own throne in jeopardy. He had "no personal objections to him, but all considerations must give way before the *raison d'état.*"

Another candidate was the Archduke Charles of Austria, but, although supported by both Grey and Palmerston, his supporters were told by Metternich that the Archduke would decline the crown. Leopold of Saxe-Coburg's name was put forward.

Meanwhile Belgium was proclaimed independent, and both in Brussels and in Paris the question of a ruler assumed increasing importance. In the former capital there was a French party, advocating a union with France, and an Orange party, composed of partisans of the Prince of Orange. In Paris Lord Stuart noted the language of the military party, especially of Magnin and Lamarque in the Chamber, as evincing their hostility to any settlement which should rule out the future union of Belgium with France, and causing the King to move away from the plans of England and the other Powers.[1]

Yet Louis Philippe, in his own mind, was as far from consenting to the choice of his son, the Duc de Nemours, as he was to any union of Belgium with France. Indeed, as to the former, he had been clearly

[1] F.O.: Stuart de Rothesay to Palmerston (December 31, 1830).

informed that Lord Grey—or perhaps only Palmerston—would regard it as a case for war.[1]

Stuart de Rothesay, from his former connection with The Hague and Belgium, took the keenest interest in this Belgian question. He longed with all his heart to remain in the Rue St. Honoré, to contribute to a settlement. The crisis approached: one day a distinguished Belgian brought to Paris a renewal of the offer of the Belgian crown to the young Duc de Nemours on the part of the Provisional Government. This time—to placate the British Government—Antwerp was to be made into a free port, its fortifications were to be destroyed, and an English Princess chosen as the new King's consort. As a result of Louis Philippe's refusal to accept this arrangement for his son, the French party in Brussels transferred their support to the Duc de Leuchtenberg, and a trio of notorious French Bonapartist generals arrived in Belgium.

No wonder, when rioting broke out in Paris, the Citizen King grew alarmed. He opened up his mind freely to the British Ambassador. But, alas! it was too late—Stuart's successor was already on the way.

The Stuarts were not, however, to escape all violence. There were exciting incidents enough before they left the Embassy, when it was not quite certain what any day might bring forth. The Ministry, like the mob's temper, continued precarious. Summarizing the situation, Lady Stuart wrote of Louis Philippe's advisers, Laffitte, Soult, and Sebastiani, that they must "stick to him or be kicked out."

On December 24, 1830, she writes:

[1] "This declaration," wrote Sebastiani to Talleyrand, "had at least the merit of frankness." Palmerston never lacked this merit.

"Now that we have finished off our *trois journées* and have put our National Guard to bed, after having been up three nights, you will all be taking fright about us and wondering how it is to end."

"The insurgents," she continues, "really meant mischief and, had the Garde Nationale not proved true, mischief *must* have followed. And some very alarming moments did occur. . . . I was a good deal frightened by rumours, all of which died away by degrees."

On the previous day, however,

"it looked still more alarming, when a guard of ten soldiers and a sergeant came to take care of us and secure us against pillage! Lord Stuart sent away our defenders, and so did most of our colleagues, but not all. . . . We should have been safe enough except amongst those whom Dupin designated in the Chamber as the most dangerous perturbators, *les Volcans*. It is dreadful to think of the torture of mind the poor prisoners experienced when every horrible cry reached their ears; twice the gates were forced. I am told that Polignac was overwhelmed with his sentence, which he never anticipated . . . but I suspect his poor little wife will be satisfied at his safety.

"The complication of intrigue and ambition is very disgusting, and the probability of general war increases much from this combination."

All this while the Granvilles had been waiting for the departure of the Stuarts. For her part, Lady Granville bore the delay impatiently, so eager was she to be back in the Faubourg again. But, as we have seen, the Stuarts were in no hurry, and no reply came to Lord Granville's first request to know the exact date when it would be convenient for him and his family to take over the Embassy.

On December 30 Lady Granville records :

" Nothing yesterday from Lord Stuart, but Mrs. Hamilton, wife of the Secretary of the Embassy, writes, evidently (I think) begged, to deprecate our coming soon. Yet go we shall ! "

In giving up the Embassy this time Lady Betty had at least the consciousness that with the end of Charles X's reign a brilliant social era had closed in the French capital, of which none had taken greater advantage than herself. Mrs. Augustus Craven, in her *Life* of Lady Granville's daughter, Lady Georgiana Fullerton, speaks of the first Granville regime as coinciding with one of the most distinguished epochs in the history of the French capital—an epoch which resembled nothing else exactly which had preceded or which followed it. But surely her description is far truer, because relating to a much longer period, of the regime of Lord Stuart de Rothesay.

" A combination of circumstances gave conversation an unprecedented interest and charm. Many of the married ladies whose early life may have been frivolous, transformed by the terrible experiences of adversity, impressed their hearers with the history of their sufferings and the difficulties which they had to overcome. The men, on their part, either because they had shared in the varied and strange experiences of exile—experiences painful in some cases, full of adventure in all—or because they had taken part in the famous battles whose memory was still recent and vivid, brought to the common stock something better than mere idle gossip, without at the same time ever mixing it with boredom and platitudes, thanks to a natural gaiety which had survived every trial. The society thus constituted was fanned by the breath of restored peace, which allowed

strangers to come to Paris and Parisians to travel abroad; it lent to public and social life a sense of well-being which as yet had not grown into satiety. Paris, more especially, was the gainer. A number of salons had been reopened, and one found without effort this love of conversation, so dear to the French because they shine in it.

"This era, in which the gaiety of the present mingled with the dignity of the past, lasted until 1830." [1]

It was, of course (as the writer states), prolonged somewhat later, although afterwards the Paris salons were turned into hostile camps.

[1] Mrs. A. Craven: *Life of Lady Georgiana Fullerton.*

CHAPTER VII

GRANVILLE'S SECOND TERM

LORD GRANVILLE could hardly help thinking it odd that the first interview which the King of the French accorded him as British Ambassador, who had passed the previous night in a chamber of the Embassy fragrant with memories of the now, alas! for ever departed Pauline, should refer almost wholly to the Bonapartes.

It was a topic quite *démodé* when Granville had quitted Paris less than three years before.

In his first letter to Granville (January 7, 1831), Palmerston had counselled him:

"It may not be amiss for you to hint upon any fitting occasion that, though we are anxious to cultivate the best understanding with France and to be on the terms of the most intimate friendship with her, yet it is only on the supposition that she contents herself with the finest territory in Europe and does not mean to open a new chapter of encroachment and conquest."

"I have no fear of war," wrote Lady Granville, "or any mischief but what comes from those horrid Belgians, and they, I think, must soon end in troubling nobody but themselves."

The danger was of Eugène de Beauharnais' son, the Duc de Leuchtenberg, successfully rallying the Bonapartists, both in Belgium and France. Yet by existing

treaties no member of the Bonaparte family was permitted to live in Belgium. The King told Granville, therefore, that he had been thinking of a way out of the difficulty. He had hit upon the best prescription for the new State. He had also found a means to convince public opinion in England that the French Government was really resolved on peace. These proposals he would entrust to a special diplomatic agent to convey at once to London. Granville was interested to learn that the diplomatic agent was the former lover of Queen Hortense, the stepdaughter of Napoleon (and the mother of Prince Louis Napoleon). This was the Comte de Flahaut, father of the later celebrity, the Duc de Morny, half-brother of Napoleon III. As for the prince who was to be put forward as an ideal candidate for the vacant Belgian throne, who would be universally acceptable and unite all parties, it was to be the Bourbon Prince Charles of Naples!

Granville was very dubious; he was still more dubious when at a later interview he heard the King unfold his grandiose plan for an Anglo-French offensive and defensive alliance on the Continent. France, in effect, was to incorporate a part of Belgium, England was to garrison Antwerp, which was to be converted into a sort of Hanse town; Prince Charles of Naples was to be placed on the Belgian throne, and the other Powers were to be requested not to interfere. When Palmerston heard of all this he replied that "these alliances are not popular in England, but that if France were attacked unjustly England would be found on her side." Talleyrand himself, keen as he was at this time for an Anglo-French *entente*, was altogether opposed to the idea of helping England to regain a footing upon the Continent. He thought it would be too high a price to pay even for

a measure so desirable as the extension of the French frontiers into Belgium.

Meanwhile, the Granvilles at the Embassy were getting into touch again with Parisian society, and making acquaintance at first hand with the leading political characters of the day. They attended together a sitting of the Chamber, and Lady Granville notes :

" Odillon Barrot speaks incomparably well ; he has a fine, determined countenance, a fine voice and *subjuguant* manner set in a vulgar frame. Benjamin Delessert looks like an excellent English farmer ; Lafayette has *par excellence* the manner, tone, and voice *de la bonne compagnie*, leans on the *bord*, and speaks to the deputies as we should say, ' Were you at the Opera last night, Mr. Such-a-one ? '

" Sebastiani spoke uncommonly well ; his voice as clear as a bell, and the solemnity of his manner is not amiss in his ministerial attitude."

For her part Lady Granville's quick mind, as we find from her letters, grasped the significance of the political and social changes in Paris since the Revolution of July. To begin with, the personal and devoted friends of the ex-Royal Family, such as d'Escars, Chasteleux, Damas, and Narbonne, had promptly retired into the country.

" Here there are two different parties into which, though there are many shades, society divides itself." What were called *les Dames de la Mouvement*—Madame de Vandermont, des Boigne, de Montmorency, de Valençay, and de Laborde—frequented the Palais Royal and supported the existing regime. On the other hand were *les Dames de la Résistance*, comprising nearly the whole of the Faubourg St. Germain : Madame de Girardin

(" violent ") ; Madame de Maille and others (" almost ruined ") ; Madame de Jumilhoe ; de Noailles ; Madame Theodore de Bauffrement, daughter of the Duchesse de Montmorency. Of the last-named two it was to be expected. *" Elles portent le deuil ; cela ne durera pas ; c'est un très petit deuil."*

And again :

" All wish for peace. All the sound-headed and right-minded pine for order ; all love and respect the present Royal Family ; all condemn Charles X and Polignac."

Besides these two categories there was a third—*les Dames de l'Attente.* They were said to be only watching the weather.

It was distinctly embarrassing to the Granvilles that, although the Stuart de Rothesays had given up the Embassy, they stayed on in Paris at a private hotel, where they received large numbers of their friends.

" I hear," wrote Lady Granville, " Lord Stuart is in force and good humour ; she, unwell and very low, being, I am told, in despair at staying on here, but *he* insisted upon it. . . . I think the case a little more complicated than I did—I mean as to society."

Faced with what threatened to be the setting up of two separate English social camps, Lady Granville took a leaf out of Lady Betty's book and bethought her of a big ball for February at the Embassy. Only now, more than ever, there were pecuniary considerations.

" It was very different *autrefois,*" she complains, " when I had only to say like the children—more, more—

as to light, flowers, etc." But now she was obliged to retrench and spend only half as much as formerly.

"This makes me foolishly nervous and anxious, especially as I must say the Stuarts, who saved in every-day life, gave splendid balls." However, Granville reluctantly assented to the expense.

"Think of Betty's spirit, who had three double lamps in the conservatory, and seven or eight hundred francs of flowers; and yet was called stingy because she put up some pretty white moire instead of hideous red silk! *Ainsi va le monde,* and who would fear its criticisms but those who have taken calomel and starved!"

On January 21, 1831, she records:

"The Stuarts and the Mintos dined here on Wednesday and yesterday I took Betty to the Opera with me.

"She is good, sensible, has behaved perfectly well in a difficult situation; but she talks too much, too loud, is too absent, too busy, huffy, with notions of all kinds about civilities and ceremonies. This makes the pleasure less of endeavouring to make the self-imposed awkwardness of situation as little irksome to her as possible.

"Do not tell. Mrs. Hamilton hinted to me that what would console her most would be being considered as a cut above the general society here—first in all times and places. So I see it is. She even likes a nod and smile occasionally in the midst of the things, and in short would like to enact, with me, ex-Queen and *regnante.* So when she comes we play at Ladies, and all is as smooth as possible. Lord Stuart and I are, *tout autrement,* as happy and as little dignified as need be.

"My only grief and care is economy. I flatter myself there is an immense difference, but it is the eternal subject of lighting that vexes me. Granville does not

care a straw about the thing looking less well than formerly. It is all in reasoning perfectly true, but I find to my shame that I have not a mind that can raise itself above dark rooms and an ill-lit ball."

Granville's mind was fully occupied just then with his diplomacy. Belgium was endangering Franco-British relations. The reception in Brussels of Louis Philippe's plan concerning Prince Charles of Naples was wholly unfavourable. Even the leader of the Catholic party announced his preference for the Bonapartist candidate. To the King his agent in Brussels reported that the only way to prevent the election of the Duc de Leuchtenberg was to consent to that of the Duc de Nemours. The Powers, and especially England, who had shown no respect for Belgian interests in regard to her boundary dispute with Holland, must be defied. "Even at the risk of a war this course should be adopted. Belgium would be with us heart and soul, and we should begin the campaign in possession of the twenty-three frontier fortresses, all of which are provided with an immense *matériel*."[1]

On February 4 Granville heard that Louis Philippe's son, the Duc de Nemours, had been chosen King of the Belgians the previous day, and a deputation was at that moment on its way to convey the tidings officially to the King of the French.

Granville reported to London:

"My dear Palmerston:

"Never was a change of mind, of temper, and of language so rapid as that which took place to-day in the case of Sebastiani. At one o'clock he was warm, warlike, and mounted on his highest horse; at half-past five he comes into my room to announce the telegraph

[1] Bresson to Sebastiani (January 31, 1831).

communication of the election of the Duc de Nemours, and in a much subdued but most friendly tone to inform me of the King's positive refusal, and begs me to obliterate all mention of what passed between us this morning on the subject of the protocol. He expressed a wish to act cordially with the other Powers of the Conference; but what he expressed with most earnestness was his desire that the confidence between us should be unbounded. Tell Lord Palmerston, he said, that we will not have a thought concealed from him, and I look to his acting always was with the most frankness."

The British Cabinet having met and resolved that, if the Belgian Crown were accepted by Nemours, war with France would follow, Granville went straight to the Tuileries, and heard once more from the Royal lips that Louis Philippe had not the slightest intention of allowing his son to accept the Belgian throne. What he wanted—what he had wanted all along—he protested to the Ambassador, was Prince Charles.

But there was another matter even more serious. Belgium was profoundly dissatisfied at the judgment of the London Conference in delimiting her frontier and apportioning her share of the public debt, and the French Ministry had decided to support her views. Accordingly, Sebastiani wrote a letter to Bresson, the French agent of the Conference in Brussels, stating that France would refuse her consent to the arrangement "unless the conditions were satisfactory to both parties." This was a very grave step, especially as Sebastiani's letter had been published in the Belgian newspapers without having previously been communicated to the Conference or to the British Ambassador in Paris. Palmerston, in great indignation, wrote to Granville to obtain an explanation. He was requested to point

out that, " when a Government sees fit to disavow the acts of its plenipotentiary, it should acquaint the parties with whom the engagement has been made of the fact, not, as in this case, communicate its disavowal to third parties." Palmerston went on to intimate that the British Ministry might have summarily stopped the proceedings of the Conference altogether ; it had only allowed it to continue " because it was convinced that satisfactory explanations would be forthcoming."

Sebastiani, who was personally all for peace, and really, as Granville said, an easy man to get on with, professed himself greatly hurt. He said that Bresson had no authority to publish his confidential letter, which was only to be shown to the Brussels Deputies ; and that, furthermore, the London Conference had no power to do more than mediate between the contending parties and not dictate measures to them. " France could not be a member of a revised Holy Alliance which was to decide arbitrarily upon the affairs of nations." [1]

To make matters worse, the Dutch also had grown refractory ; they held the citadel of Antwerp, and closed the navigation of the Scheldt. The Belgian Government responded by blockading Maestricht. Whereupon Bresson and Lord Ponsonby, the joint agents of the Conference, were instructed to present an ultimatum to the Provisional Government. The Frenchmen, relying on support from Paris, refused to sign the ultimatum. Palmerston therefore directed Granville to inform Sebastiani that M. Bresson was forthwith suspended from his functions as agent of the London Conference. " Very well, then, *milord*," cried Sebastiani excitedly (he was not Corsican born for nothing), " I will retain M. Bresson in Brussels as Minister for France."

[1] F.O.: Granville to Palmerston (February 11, 12, 1831).

Granville's first audiences with the Foreign Minister, Count Sebastiani, had been amiable enough. But at a later stage the Minister lost his temper over Palmerston, between whom and himself there was no love lost. He accused the English statesman of intrigue and double-dealing in his Belgian policy, saying one thing to Lord Ponsonby, the British Minister in Brussels, and quite another to Talleyrand and Granville. Granville reported this to Palmerston, who wrote (February 17, 1831) :

" *Private.*

" My dear Granville :

" Sebastiani really should be made to understand that he must have the goodness to learn to keep his temper, or, when it fails him, let him go and vent his ill-humour upon some other quarter and not bestow it upon England. We are not used to be accused of making people dupes. Pray explain to him that Talleyrand misunderstood what I said to him about the Prince of Naples, and seems to have overstated it to his Court. He asked me to direct Ponsonby to desist from giving support to the Prince of Orange. I said I should advise Ponsonby to do what I had always told him to do, namely, to take no part whatever in favour of anybody. But I did not say to Talleyrand—at least, I never meant to say—that Ponsonby would assist in putting forward Prince Charles."

Lord Granville replied (February 21) :

" I hope that the severe but salutary lesson given to him [Sebastiani] in your private letter to me of the 17th, and which you sent through the French Foreign Office, will have the effect of making him keep his temper under control.

"The mode of conveying indirectly to a Government opinion that it might be uncivil to state directly, through the medium of letters certain to be opened and read, is not unfrequently resorted to."

But Bresson had already recognized the impossibility of his position. The Belgians themselves complained that he had deceived them by alleging that his Royal master would, in the last instance, allow the Duc de Nemours to be crowned. Now, it appeared Louis Philippe would take no such step, not even to avert the danger of the Bonapartist's election. The deputies had made themselves ridiculous by electing the King's son. Bresson tried to explain ; but the only explanation which would have satisfied them would be too disastrous to utter. For he had so preyed upon the King's fears by exaggerating the Bonapartist agitation that he had actually won a reluctant assent to the candidature of Nemours.

"You know the august mouth from which issued my last orders," he complained to Sebastiani. "You heard them. Do not fear, they shall remain hidden at the bottom of my heart. But I cannot now retrace my footsteps. I cannot be an agent of another change of policy. I must ask you to replace me. I can sacrifice my interests—not my honour."

Poor Bresson resigned and went back to Paris, and another agent was appointed by the Conference in his stead, much to Talleyrand's relief.

A memorial service in honour of the anniversary of the Duc de Berri's death was the occasion of an outbreak on the part of the Paris mob. The church and the palace of the Archbishop were sacked, and much property was destroyed. Granville was disgusted at the

pusillanimity of the Court and Ministry, and at the concessions made by the King himself. Religious emblems were ordered to be removed from the front of churches, the bust of Louis XVIII at the Louvre was destroyed, and the historic fleur-de-lis was erased from the Royal coat-of-arms.

"I went to the Palais Royal on Saturday," writes Lady Granville, "and thought them all terribly low and *accablés*. We all trust," she adds, "the National Guards."

The Ambassador and his wife made a promenade together (February 16), when she noted:

"Live toys of National Guards, some on horseback, parading on the quays and over the bridges. Little knots of people, whispering, and everybody excited. Madame Apponyi [the Russian Ambassador's wife] miserable at all *la profanation et le scandale*."

It was soon made clear that Laffitte was not strong enough to cope with the situation, and on March 14 he made way for Casimir Périer, in whom all the better elements had confidence. But to Granville it was matter for congratulation that Sebastiani was not disturbed as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and his satisfaction was shared by all his colleagues.

"The 'Dips,'" wrote Lady Granville to her sister, "are all pleased that Sebastiani remains; he is decidedly pacific."

Sebastiani's pacific inclinations were, however, being just then submitted in other parts of Europe, besides Belgium and Poland (where the Poles had just fought a

bloody battle with the Russians at Grochov), to a heavy strain. There broke out an insurrection in Italy against the misrule of the Pope, which the Holy Father desired to quell with the aid of Austrian troops. As soon as he heard of this request Sebastiani informed Metternich that the French Government would regard Austria's compliance as a declaration of war against France.

Metternich thereupon pointed out that the Italian troubles were fomented by the Bonapartists. Both Prince Charles of Naples and his brother, Prince Louis Napoleon, were known to be serving with the rebel army at Cività Castellana. Austria at any moment could put an end to the Republican agitation in France and at least three other Continental countries by simply allowing the Duc de Reichstadt, sometime King of Rome, to be proclaimed Emperor of the French.

This latter was no idle threat, and made Louis Philippe and his Ministry pause. It was decided to proceed with infinite caution. Pressure was to be put upon the Papal Government by France, in conjunction with England, to inaugurate certain reforms. Metternich agreed with suspicious alacrity to act with Sebastiani and Palmerston. All seemed to be of favourable augury when news reached Paris that a Treaty had been concluded between Austria and the Pope. It turned out to be false, but a further piece of intelligence was authentic. The Emperor had decided to crush the insurrection in Bologna, and the Imperial troops were already in possession of the town. Granville instantly sought the Foreign Minister, and found him in a state of great perturbation. War on France's part, he said, was inevitable —*inevitable*. This Granville reported in the dispatch which he drafted for Palmerston that afternoon (March 18) at the Embassy. Before evening, however, he went again to

see the Minister, and read him the dispatch. Sebastiani —grown cooler now—suggested that he should substitute the phrase " war is very probable."

And, indeed, for a fortnight matters were very critical. On March 28 a message was prepared for the Chambers asking for a vote of military credit, simultaneously with a demand to Austria to evacuate the Papal States. Lord Granville saw Casimir Périer that same day, who told him that he took a hopeful view, because the Austrians would have suppressed the Romagna revolutionaries before the French note could arrive in Vienna, and as for the message to the Chambers, so far from precipitating war it would, on the contrary, aid the King in preserving peace.[1] The Government was obliged to take a high tone or expose itself to the patriotic reproaches of the war party. The King himself assured Granville that in his opinion there would be no hostilities. The preservation of the temporal power of the Pope was a cardinal feature of French policy. Five or six million of his subjects professed the Roman Catholic faith, and he was determined to remain on good terms with the head of the Church.

Granville's opinion, expressed to Palmerston, was that Prussia would decline to take part in the struggle should the Austrian intervention in Italy lead to war with France. As regards Russia, one could not be sure : the Tsar, in spite of his Polish commitments, continued very bellicose, and was ready to back up Austria in anything, especially towards France.

Granville spent several anxious weeks before he heard that the Imperial troops had dispersed the Italian insurgents and restored a certain measure of tranquillity without transcending the spirit of the Pope's urgent

[1] F.O., France: Granville to Palmerston (March 28, 1831).

appeal. His Holiness promised to institute certain reforms, and by July 17 the Austrians were on the march again over the frontiers.

At a dinner given to the Granvilles at the Palais Royal,

"The King and I talked without ceasing. He gave me a detailed account of all the terrible days. The Queen was *très souffrante*, and is more low than her relations. Madame Adélaïde, very sprack and delightful, sitting by the King and Odillon Barrot, the most violent of the Radical Party—'*L'odieux Barrot*,' as *les Dames de la Résistance* called him."

In her social enterprises Lady Granville was accustomed to rely a good deal on the Embassy staff of eligible young men.

"As to the Secretary, Hamilton," she writes, "my only regret is, *entre nous*, that he [Granville] has such a man as poor Mr. Hamilton, who, as he grows older and less sanguine about his own affairs, is left with the outward man entirely unstuffed, not one idea or *qualité* of understanding that can make him of the slightest use or relief in any one branch of diplomacy."

Hamilton, however, continued to stay on until he was replaced by Arthur Aston, a very able man and diplomatist, who was afterwards to distinguish himself in Spain and earn high praise from Queen Victoria. It was he who acted as chargé d'affaires in 1834, when the Duke of Wellington was for a brief period Foreign Minister and named his brother, Lord Cowley, to the post of Ambassador.

From the same lively pen we have a picture of the attachés :

"We have had," she writes soon after her arrival, "the attachés to dinner. They are all civil and good-humoured. Ashburnham, rheumatic, languid, and upon my woord I doon't kno—or—ow—*genre*, which is not useful or efficient, but he seems sensible and gentleman-like. Magennis, well-meaning, good-tempered, would be a puppy if he knew how ; rather prosy.

"Waller, a good-natured, vulgar little man. Lord Harry Vane,[1] good-natured, inoffensive. Craddock,[2] a very fine thing—a Russian prince of high degree."

Other rising diplomats who came and went about the Embassy at this time were Henry Bulwer (later, Lord Dalling), who was believed to be writing a book about France and the French ; and the young and very clever Lord Normanby, who had already done so.

[1] Afterwards Duke of Cleveland.

[2] Afterwards Lord Howden. He had just married a Russian lady of high rank.

CHAPTER VIII

DIPLOMACY IN THE 'THIRTIES

THE Granville ball, which duly took place, was a most successful affair; yet still the Stuarts incomprehensibly stayed on in Paris. That was not all: Lady Betty continued to haunt the Embassy. Sitting in Pauline's boudoir, Lady Granville was troubled, and at the same time entertained.

"I cannot," she writes, "let my thoughts dwell on Betty. She comes in and out whenever she likes, and is like Helena Robinson or any other here. I shall be sorry when she goes; to lose a very pleased, happy person, and miss her in my society—she being a most efficient, talking, animated member of society. Always glad to come early, stay late, talk without ceasing. *Bon-jours* and how-d'ye-dos all the visitors much more audibly and busily than I do myself. She is esteemed and popular, and whatever was amiss in the doing here was, and is known to have been, singly and wholly *his*[1] work. I do not feel as if she was here—never think of her but when I see her. Nobody feels the least *gêné* at finding her always sitting near me, and all her toads toad on because they see that I toad her, too. Mexborough [Lady Stuart's sister] is ravished, and sits with her mouth wide open—like Paul the dancer, only very still, not comprehending what she sees beyond that 'nothing meets her eyes but sights of bliss.'"[2]

[1] Lord Stuart, the late Ambassador.
[2] Lady Granville: *Letters*.

Clearly, from this hysterical effusion, the Ambassador's lady was not nearly so pleased as she pretended to be; and yet, somehow, Lady Stuart, by her very ingenuousness, disarmed enmity.

A little later the Ambassadress writes:

"I like Betty much better as we go on. . . . People have left off looking surprised at seeing her here in the evening, when they drop in with their best speeches, which is a great comfort to them and to me. *He* comes rarely, prowls about among *les douairières*, as he tells me."

Later in the summer, when the English Ministry had successfully averted a crisis, we are told "Lord Stuart came in as cross as a lapdog and as rude as a bear. I thought this promised well," comments Lady Granville. For it was well known that Stuart de Rothesay still entertained hopes of high diplomatic appointment when the Tories returned to power.

As Stuart cynically opined, it would be "everlastingly Belgium." One lovely day in early spring, leaving Lady Granville and their daughters gathering crocuses and daffodils in the Embassy garden, Lord Granville drove to the Tuileries, and had an important audience with the King of the French and his Foreign Minister, Sebastiani. Belgium was a country which apparently pined as eagerly for a monarch as other countries in Europe did to rid themselves of theirs. Louis Philippe's choice, Prince Charles of Naples, would not do. Before the interview had lasted five minutes Granville saw that his candidature had been already abandoned.

"As the Prince is a member of the eldest branch of the Bourbons," confessed Sebastiani, "France would probably reject him." "Very well, then," said

Granville, " England has a candidate to propose. What about Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg? Will Your Majesty support his candidature? "

The King received the intimation coldly.

He observed that this prince, the widower of the English Princess Charlotte, living in England and drawing an English pension of £50,000 a year, could hardly be acceptable to Frenchmen. Granville admitted that Lord Palmerston would have preferred the Prince of Orange. He was by no means keen personally about Leopold, who had given offence by changing his mind in 1829 when chosen by the Powers for the throne of Greece. All the same, he was the best candidate. To this the King repeated that Leopold would be regarded in France as an English viceroy.

Then His Majesty suddenly changed his tone.

There was a way, he hinted, to render Leopold's election more palatable to the French. If he, or the Powers for him, were to renounce those portions of territory in the north of which France had been deprived by the treaties of 1815—well, such a consideration might, would in fact . . . !

Granville saw the point: he could himself promise nothing, but would faithfully report the conversation. On the understanding that the Belgians would adhere strictly to the territorial partition accepted by the King of the Netherlands, the French Ministry on April 17 signified its acquiescence in the proposed treaty. In return the Conference agreed in principle to the destruction of the barrier fortresses.

But Belgium was by no means satisfied with the result of all these labours on her behalf. Prince Leopold was actually elected King of the Belgians on June 4, but the National Congress persisted in laying claim to

Luxemburg, which had been awarded to Holland, and Leopold himself would not accept the crown until this matter was satisfactorily cleared up. As it happened, Luxemburg was a part of the Germanic Confederation, and the Federal Diet would be bound to intervene in order to enforce the decisions of the Conference. This would be too much for the French, and Casimir Périer told Granville that he would be powerless to restrain the Army if the Prussians and the Dutch were to attack the Belgians "ranged under the tricolour." "You English, *milord* Granville, do not make sufficient allowance for the weakness of a Government sprung from a revolution." [1]

Granville saw in Paris, as did his colleague Ponsonby in Brussels, that the Belgians by their obstinacy might easily precipitate a general European war. After a great deal of tiresome negotiation the Powers agreed to an alteration of the original conditions. A new protocol was prepared by which the *status quo* would be maintained in Luxemburg, pending future negotiations, and on the strength of this arrangement Leopold at last agreed to accept the crown—also on the understanding that, if the King of the Netherlands declined to accept the protocol, the Powers would still recognize him as the King of the Belgians.

One day Hamilton came into Granville's room to bring him the latest news from Holland. It was that the Dutch King not only refused the terms of the Conference, but had sent a note to say that, "were any Prince to accept the crown of Belgium without having acceded to *les bases de séparation* as laid down in the protocol of January 20, he would be regarded as in a state of war with His Majesty and as his enemy."

[1] F.O.: Granville to Palmerston (June 10, 1831).

Granville thought this was a piece of bluster. But the Dutch King was in earnest, perhaps thinking that France would not go to Leopold's assistance. "It would seem," wrote Granville, "that the King of Holland rather expected from the French Government approbation than opposition to his invasion." For invasion actually took place. Hostilities began on August 4.

"I feel so much interest about Leopold," writes Lady Granville (August 31), "and he seems to meet the crisis so manfully." The Belgian Army failed to make a stand, and would have been beaten by the (rather infelicitously named) Dutch General Chassé had it not been for the arrival of 50,000 French troops, before whom the Dutch fled back across their own frontier.

How awkward was the situation thus created! The French, whom it was a cardinal principle of British policy to keep out of Belgium, were now there in force, and it would, as Granville said, be "the very devil to get them out again." How had it happened? Was it due to a secret understanding between Holland and France? Palmerston, full of suspicions, wrote Granville that "Talleyrand proposed to me some time ago that we should goad the Dutch on to break the armistice cry out shame upon them, fly to the aid of the Belgians, cover Belgium with troops and settle everything as we choose": a capital plan, doubtless, if it had occurred months earlier, as a solution of the *impasse*; but carried out now, by France alone, and following Leopold's election, it promised to shatter the *entente* between England and France. The news of the French occupation caused great excitement in London, the national funds fell, and Ministers were anxious.

To the British Ambassador Sebastiani explained

that the Ministry had ordered the French corps into Belgium only because of the need for immediate action. He assured Granville that when the Dutch withdrew the French troops would retire across their frontier, and Granville accepted this assurance.

But neither Louis Philippe nor his Minister had reckoned on the temper of the Paris press and populace. When the *Moniteur* announced that Marshal Gérard's army was to be recalled there was a violent outburst. The French Chauvinists had set their hearts on remaining in Belgium. Opposition to Sebastiani increased daily in intensity. There was not only the Belgian scuttle policy, but the Poles had been abandoned and the Russians had entered the Polish capital. "Order reigns at Warsaw" was the tactless way in which Sebastiani announced the fact in the Chamber. For this offence both he and Casimir Périer were set upon by an angry mob in the Place Vendôme, narrowly escaping with their lives. Theatrical performances were interrupted by rioters, who insisted that all places of amusement should be closed as on a day of national mourning. Paris seemed on the brink of another revolution.[1] Sebastiani urged upon Granville the necessity for England's joining France in mediation on behalf of the beaten Poles. He tried to adopt the advice he had just received from

[1] Lady Granville and her daughter walked down the Boulevards. They had no untoward adventure amidst the crowds, "but one cross old woman called us '*Ces chiens d'Anglais*' because Dody trod on her toe."

Yet even in the Paris of the barricades the Ambassadress and her husband felt safe.

"A man was even heard explaining, '*Vois-tu, un ambassadeur—sais-tu ce que c'est un ambassadeur? C'est comme un parlementaire, on n'y touche pas,*'—a pleasing view of the subject," comments Lady Granville.

Talleyrand, advice which still deserves to be kept written up perpetually at the Quai d'Orsay :

" Remember, when framing your proposals to the English, that you are dealing with a cold-blooded people, and that it would be well, therefore, to avoid the use of emotional language."

Palmerston agreed to remonstrate, but it " made little impression." The Tsar replied haughtily he could not admit of foreign interference in the Polish question.

Meanwhile Leopold was in a quandary. Much as he feared a renewal of the contest with the Dutch, he dared not continue under the armed protection of France. The new treaty was infinitely worse for Belgium than the first. Yet he was being driven either to accept it or to abdicate, and so, under protest, this celebrated document was finally signed in London on November 15, 1831, between Belgium and the five Great Powers. Holland protested, but her King was warned that any act of hostility against Belgium would be considered as a declaration of war against the Powers.

When it came to carrying out the destruction of the frontier fortresses there again arose a difficulty with France, who, in view of the peculiar nature of her position, was no party to the arrangement. This difficulty was magnified in Paris until it threatened to undo all the work of the Conference. On behalf of his Government Granville never ceased urging that the Powers must be placated—that in view of the dangerous attitude of Russia it was essential that France should maintain friendly relations with England. *" It was a question of far more real importance than the question of the fortresses."* [1]

[1] Granville to Palmerston (December 19, 1831).

Leopold complained that he was "between the hammer and the anvil." If he sided with England and the Powers he could expect no help from France. If he sided with France the treaty which made Belgium an independent nation might never be ratified. Again he had to choose, and he chose the Powers.

But there was a happy settlement in sight. Holland was induced by Russia to abandon her attitude, and Leopold had discounted French animosity by an expedient suggested by his faithful friend and mentor, Stockmar. He proposed for the hand of Louis Philippe's daughter, and soon afterwards became the French King's son-in-law.

During all these trying months, further complicated by international crises elsewhere, Granville had striven unceasingly to express England's attitude to the French Government. On occasion he had found his position in Paris as trying as Talleyrand's was in London; but he had good friends in both Casimir Périer and Sebastiani. To Granville fell, moreover, the task of explaining the grave political state of England during the passage of the Reform Bill. Casimir Périer well knew that if Lord Grey was overthrown his successor would make a pacific understanding with France impossible. It would also bring about the end of his own administration.

That end was, however, to be brought about in another way. On May 16, 1832, a message was brought to the Embassy to say that Casimir Périer was dead. The Asiatic cholera had recently invaded Paris and had claimed numerous victims, and now the Premier, for some time in ill-health, had succumbed. His death—which Granville sincerely lamented—was instantly made the occasion of a rabid demonstration against his Party and the Orléans monarchy. Both Carlists and Repub-

licans joined hands over his bier. A fortnight later General Lamarque, an uncompromising partisan of the union of Belgium with France, also died, and the long-threatened insurrection broke out. It was suppressed with bloodshed, as was also the rising in the Vendée of the Duchesse de Berri, the mother of the young Pretender, the Duc de Bordeaux. In the following month the Bonapartists in turn received what was supposed to be a crushing blow in the death of Napoleon's son and heir, the Duc de Reichstadt, at Vienna.

Casimir Périer's place was not easy for Louis Philippe to fill. The Dutch-Belgian business was not yet settled, and there was no definite understanding with England as to what measures were to be taken if the Dutch failed to evacuate Antwerp. The King contemplated calling in Marshal Soult. Amongst the forcible speakers in the Chamber was a statesman of rude character, named Dupin, who, as Granville heard, believed he had claims to the Premiership. He was sent for by the King and the audience took place. He was invited to join the Cabinet. When informed that he could hardly expect the first place or even the second, Dupin grew insolent. He is said to have pointed to his hobnailed boots, and to have asked whether they were to debar him from transacting business with "*Milord* Granville." The discussion grew heated, and both forgot themselves so far that in the end the angry monarch actually seized M. Dupin by the collar and ejected him from the Royal closet.

Dupin being thus disposed of, and the leaders of the bourgeoisie, the Doctrinaires, such men as Royer-Collard, Guizot, and Broglie, not yet acceptable to the King, the latter had recourse to Marshal Soult. It seemed a strange choice, but, stated the King to Granville, the

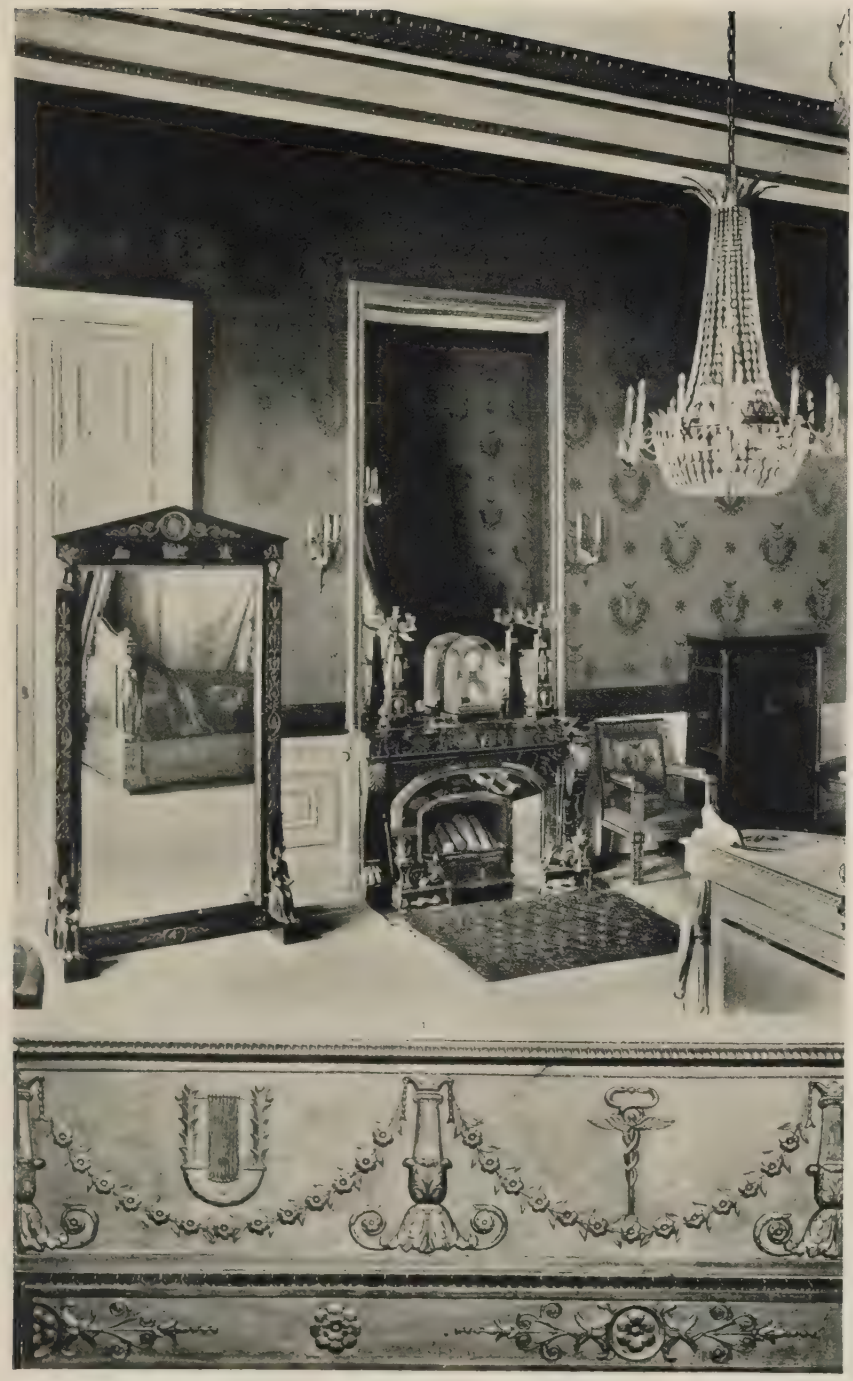
old soldier's duties would be " purely nominal." " Under any circumstances, his appointment need excite no apprehensions abroad ; his love of peace is notorious : indeed, his description of himself as *' l'apôtre de la paix '* had almost passed into a byword." [1]

As for the Duc de Broglie, Madame de Staël's son-in-law, whom the King selected as Foreign Minister, he could hardly fail, from his well-known admiration of the British Constitution, to be acceptable to the Whigs. But Broglie felt himself in a great difficulty. He was not prepared to take office in the present critical state of French public opinion unless the Belgian *impasse* were cleared away once and for all. He met Granville in Talleyrand's house in the Rue St. Florentin, and told him plainly that nothing would satisfy France but the capture of the citadel of Antwerp from the Dutch. He knew, he said, how suspicious the English were of any French military adventure in Belgium ; but, if the British Government would support France in this, he would give his solemn pledge that a week after the conquest of the citadel every French soldier should be withdrawn from the new kingdom.

It is true that King William IV, the English Tories, and the City magnates would be totally opposed to the idea, and were on the side of the Dutch ; it was also true that Belgium was far from popular in England generally. Nevertheless, Granville saw, as the days went on, that the French Ministry was committed to the project, and that opposition would only exasperate.

" I should deceive your Lordship," he wrote Palmerston, " were I to hold out any expectation that the British Government, by withholding its concurrence, could prevent a French army entering Belgium." If Pal-

[1] F.O. : Granville to Palmerston (September 28, 1832).



Phtoo: F. Contet.

THE BRITISH EMBASSY: PRINCESS PAULINE'S BEDROOM.

Below, detail of the bed.

To face p. 134.

merston protested it would probably bring about Broglie's resignation, and from his successor the cause of Anglo-French relations had much to fear.

This argument decided Lord Grey's Government, and eventually, in spite of the alarm and the threats of Prussia (Russia and Austria having been bribed to neutrality), France and England joined hands and gave the uncompromising Dutch monarch until November 12 to clear out of Belgium. Otherwise the coast of Holland would be blockaded with the combined fleets, and three days later a French army would seize Antwerp citadel and forts. As the King refused, a French force of 60,000 men under Marshal Gérard (who had on his staff two of the sons of Louis Philippe) crossed the frontier and laid siege to Antwerp. General Chassé held out until three days before Christmas, and then capitulated.

On December 27, turning over the fortress to the Belgians, the French redeemed their promise and re-crossed the frontier. The business had been a ticklish one, for English public opinion was a little shocked, not to say outraged, by this virtual military alliance with France against its old friends (and enemies!) the Dutch. Even then old William still obstinately refused to sign the treaty acknowledging Belgian sovereignty. The embargo lasted five months before he finally put his hand to a convention agreeing to the *status quo*, and not until 1838 did he acknowledge Belgian independence and Leopold's sovereignty.

Meanwhile, in the midst of all this pother in the Chancellery, this running to and fro between the Embassy and the Tuileries, this preparation and copying of multitudinous dispatches, the social side of the Embassy went on, and balls, receptions, and dinner-parties attracted the best society in Paris.

There were times when Lady Granville did not understand her daughter Georgiana, who, pale and *distraite*, spent too much time reading or sketching in the garden or writing in her room—Pauline's room. Moreover, Lady Georgiana, even at seventeen, began to manifest signs of that religious fervour which afterwards earned her a reputation for saintliness. She early showed a distaste for theatres, balls, and distractions, which caused her parents much anxiety. Then one day it came out that Lady Georgiana was in love. A young cornet of the Blues, named Fullerton, was the lucky man. He, too, was very badly smitten, and when Georgiana was at any time missed from the ball-room or the drawing-room, her brother or sister had only to step into the garden to find the lovers strolling about —preferably by moonlight. Fullerton's proposal was not long delayed, and the marriage took place at the Embassy on July 13, 1833.

Lady Georgiana was then twenty. When they came back from their honeymoon (part of which was spent at Fontainebleau), Fullerton quitted his regiment and entered the Diplomatic Service, being attached to the Embassy, where he remained until 1841.

A year or two after his sister's marriage, young Leveson Granville was also appointed attaché; so for a time they made a happy family party. Leveson eventually fell in love with a beautiful young Austrian widow, Lady Acton, who had been the high-born Marie de Dalberg, and who, though a foreigner, was quickly taken to Lady Granville's maternal bosom. "We find her charming," she wrote, after her first interview with her son's future wife.[1]

[1] Lady Granville tenderly watched over her son's early career: her maternal devotion was returned by the deep affection of the

As for Lady Georgiana, she was very happy. If she did not often attend the theatre, she was apparently not averse from organizing private theatricals, which were a frequent feature at the Embassy.

Thus, after her marriage, she writes to a friend :

" If you read the newspapers you have probably read the account of a melodrama which has been played here at the Embassy with great success. I did not appear, but I organized it, and it was very amusing. The actors were Freddy and all the gentlemen of the Embassy, Henry Greville, H. Howard, Lord Howden, and young Plunket. I wish you could have seen Freddy as a passionate lover, and playing it well, I assure you. You would have trembled as mamma did, when they fired the pistol which made him fall." [1]

Lady Georgiana used to come and sit in the Embassy garden and muse on her love of a " perfect husband." After the birth of her first baby she wrote rapturously : " Never was happiness like mine on earth."

There were other matrimonial alliances to which the Embassy lent its authority and a background. Such were the marriages between British subjects in the French capital who wished the ceremony to be on technically British soil or to avail themselves of the services of the British chaplain, who until the opening of the Embassy Church usually performed such rites in an office situated in a wing of the hotel. On August 20, 1836, a tall young gentleman of twenty-five, who signed his name as William Makepeace Thackeray, bachelor, was united to Isabella Shawe, spinster, and

future Foreign Secretary. So overcome was he by her death in 1860 that he actually contemplated a retirement from public life.

[1] Craven : *Life of Lady Georgiana Fullerton.*

afterwards both stepped into a waiting *fiacre* and were driven away up the Champs-Elysées. The lady brought him no fortune, and he himself was now dependent upon his pen ; but their hearts were full of hope and confidence. Alas, this union was destined to be clouded by tragic misfortune.

To return to the year of Lady Georgiana's marriage, there was still a great deal of trouble in the diplomatic waters, which required adroitness to circumvent. The Belgian danger was over, but there arose in turn Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Portugal to threaten peaceful Anglo-French relations.

The British Foreign Office had the best of reasons for looking upon France's penchant towards Egypt, and particularly the province of Syria, with suspicion. Bonaparte's adventures in that country had deeply stirred French sentiment, and Granville knew that the memory of those adventures was still very active in France. The conquest of Algiers was regarded by many Frenchmen as a step in the right direction, and indeed, if the ill-fated Polignac had been allowed a free hand, he would have sought to subsidize Mehemet Ali and employ a corps of Egyptian troops against Algeria. Later, France had offered to mediate between the Sultan and the Pasha. But if British policy was totally against France's gaining any footing in Egypt, much more was it the policy of both countries that Russia should not interfere.

The " integrity of the Ottoman Empire " was already a fixed principle. Yet Mehemet Ali's victorious armies were marching towards Constantinople, and the Sultan, in despair, saw no other remedy but to call upon Russia to aid him. The Russians responded with alacrity : but at the last moment the Sultan's heart misgave him, and

he decided to yield Egypt and Syria to his rebellious vassal rather than throw himself into the arms of the heretics. Nevertheless, he concluded (July 8, 1833) a treaty with Russia closing the Dardanelles to the warships of all nations. This gave Russia a strategic advantage which both the French and English Governments saw with alarm. But for the present, as Broglie told Granville, it would be " imprudent for Great Britain and France to found upon the treaty any measures of decided hostility." Meanwhile, they must be vigilant and remove one source of danger by keeping an eye on Mehemet Ali.

All these matters, here briefly touched upon, were incidental to the new joint action between England and France. They involved a great strain upon Granville. For, in spite of the *entente*, there was an atmosphere of mutual distrust. Each country suspected the other of an *arrière pensée*. This was true, of course, of all Europe. No one knew what was in Metternich's mind, or could appraise the exact degree of disparity between his words and intentions. It is perhaps true of all diplomacy at all times and places. But the commerce between Palmerston and Broglie—between Ministers and Ambassadors—was further complicated, not merely by the popular attitude of suspicion in both countries, but by a growing tendency in Louis Philippe himself to adopt a line of his own in European affairs—and to impress his personal view upon his Ministers.

This tendency became very marked when dynastic troubles broke out in both Spain and Portugal. It is not necessary here to do more than recapitulate briefly the international situation in so far as it bore upon the labours of the British Ambassador in Paris.

When in September 1833 the King of Spain, Ferdi-

nand VII, died, that country was plunged into a war of succession. By the ancient law of Spain, if there were no direct male heirs, the females could succeed to the throne. But in 1713, in order to prevent the union of the French and Spanish crowns, a Pragmatic Sanction, giving the preference to the male line, was adopted. This was, however, repealed in 1789, and the repeal was confirmed in 1830, in order that the offspring of Ferdinand's fourth wife, Christina of Naples, if it proved a daughter, should inherit the crown. Five months later, a daughter, Isabella, was born, and much to the disgust of Don Carlos, the King's brother, was promptly proclaimed Princess of the Asturias and heiress to the throne. On Ferdinand's death Christina proclaimed herself Regent, and both France and England made haste to acknowledge her daughter as Queen of Spain.

A week later her brother-in-law's adherents were shouting " Long live Carlos V ! " and he was forthwith proclaimed King at Vittoria.

At the same time there was a serious state of affairs in the neighbouring kingdom of Portugal. There also was a young Queen, Donna Maria, whose father, Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, had abdicated in her favour, appointing his brother, Dom Miguel, to the Regency. The latter broke faith, abrogated the Constitution, and usurped the throne. Dom Pedro returned to Portugal and, with the approval of both France and England, set about reconquering his daughter's kingdom. Granville ascertained from Broglie that the French Ministry considered it essential to the peace of Europe that Dom Miguel should be expelled from Portugal, and wished the British Government to join with France in his expulsion. But Granville already had heard rumours that the King of the French rather fancied the idea of

marrying one of his sons to the young Portuguese Queen, and Palmerston had no desire that the French should extend their influence in Portugal. He sincerely wished to see the affairs in that country settled, but he would much rather keep France out of the settlement. Affairs took a favourable turn when, in the summer of 1833, the Miguelite fleet was destroyed and the representative of Donna Maria occupied Lisbon.

But if France had been so far prevented from interfering in Portugal, she was not to be dissuaded from concentrating French troops on the Spanish frontier. When the news of this reached Palmerston he grew alarmed, and wrote Granville to obtain an explanation. Broglie assured the Ambassador that neither Louis Philippe nor his Ministers intended the French troops to cross the Pyrenees, and reiterated his belief that there would be no peace in the Peninsula until Dom Miguel was expelled from Portugal. The French were ready to respect England's traditional dislike to any foreign intrusion in that kingdom, but if France were not to perform a necessary duty, then Great Britain should take it upon herself. Grey's Government, however, shrank from sending troops to Portugal. But it happened that Don Carlos was already levying war from Portuguese territory against Queen Christina's Government, and so Spain could properly intervene. A treaty was thereupon proposed with Spain, by which the latter should furnish an invading army and England the naval force.

When Paris learnt that France was to be excluded from this arrangement there was the usual excitement. Broglie might have been induced to approve, but Broglie had just been forced to resign on another issue. Granville, as well as Talleyrand, recognized that the state of

French public opinion must be taken into consideration ; and eventually Palmerston gave way. By the Quadruple Treaty of April 22, 1834, France became a consenting, but not an active, party to the measures to be taken against both Pretenders in the Peninsula.

A month later success seemed to have crowned the joint effort. A decisive battle was fought, both Pretenders capitulated, and both apparently abandoned the struggle. Dom Miguel accepted a small pension and retired to Italy, and Don Carlos sailed on a British warship for London. But the satisfaction of the Allies was brief. The Carlists were so far from being crushed that a few weeks later Don Carlos, secretly crossing France, was again at their head, and the little Queen Isabella's throne was once more in danger. Clearly the English and French Governments must now act with more vigour.

Each country, it may be pointed out, was impelled by its own reasons for extending material help to the young Spanish Queen. Both were, of course, desirous of putting a stop to the struggle between Christinos and Carlists, which was assuming a bloody character.

France had always sought to establish her influence in Spain, so that, in case of a war on her Eastern frontier, there would be no fear of an attack from beyond the Pyrenees. As a matter of fact, the old Salic law of Spain had been a benefit to France. Now that it was abolished there was always a chance that an Austrian Archduke might wed the Spanish Queen. Louis Philippe himself admitted to Lord Granville that personally he preferred the absolutist Don Carlos to having Liberal institutions established under the Queen Regent, and he was " greatly afraid that the Peninsula would become the resort of all the revolutionaries and republicans in Europe."

Yet in spite of these views the French King and his Ministers dared not stand aside. They feared their own people; they dared not run the risk of isolation in Europe if they cut loose from the Quadruple Alliance.

Palmerston's reason (stated years later) for assisting the Spanish people to establish a constitutional form of government was that in so doing they were "assisting to secure the political independence of Spain, and they had no doubt that the maintenance of that independence would be conducive to important British interests." These important British interests were to frustrate any purely French interest at Madrid.

All this time Paris was full of agitators, and the King's courage (of which he had plenty) was constantly being put to the test. Lady Granville records (July 29, 1835):

"Yesterday was a horrible day. In the morning an attempt to assassinate the King, his sons, and the whole entourage. De Broglie had a button and his *nœud de cravate* shot off, Flahaut his horse's ear, the Duc de Trevise killed and several other generals and distinguished officers." Yet "the enthusiasm shown for the King beyond everything."

Louis Philippe was against lending armed assistance to the Queen Regent, and when the Queen Regent appealed to him he took counsel with Granville, and told her that the most he could do would be to transfer to her the Foreign Legion, then in the French service at Algiers. The British Government had no objection to this: the Foreign Enlistment Act was suspended in England, and officers and men were encouraged to enter the service of the Queen of Spain. By the autumn of 1835 several thousand of English and French volunteers

embarked for Spain. The answer of Don Carlos to this was to announce that any person not of Spanish nationality caught in arms against him would be shot. England was outraged at such a declaration, and wished France to join with her in a protest. Granville saw Louis Philippe and his Ministers. All save the Duc de Broglie were totally averse to such a step as Lord Melbourne's Government proposed. They pointed out that were France to use threatening language to Don Carlos and her menaces were disregarded, a French army would certainly have to be sent across the frontier, and that both Governments had already agreed that this would be highly inexpedient. But, protested Granville, surely a remonstrance against such a barbarous decree was a duty which France owed to her soldiers just transferred to the Spanish service. His words were listened to coldly : nothing could be done.

Granville now felt sure that Louis Philippe was secretly in sympathy with the Carlists. Already, in the previous year, the King had all but carried through a private plan for marrying one of his sons to the young Queen Maria of Portugal ; it was only frustrated by her marriage to Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, an alliance which effectually quashed French influence at Lisbon.

In Madrid everybody was aware of the rivalry of English and French interests in Spain. Don Carlos openly boasted that the French were on his side, and it was reported to Granville that on the road between Bayonne and Irun an uninterrupted stream of wagons might be seen openly conveying stores and provisions to the insurgent army. All the satisfaction, however, he could get was that "greater vigilance would be exercised on the frontier." The lucrative trade went on.

And now came a delicate business, indeed, for the

GARDEN OF THE BRITISH EMBASSY.
(Collection G. Hartmann.)

To face p. 144.

Ambassador. The Queen Regent was in sad need of money. The Exchequer, largely owing to the lack of revenue from imports (for which the smuggling system was responsible), was empty. Mendizabal, the Prime Minister, proposed to the British representative at Madrid that, if England would consent to lend a million and a half sterling, Spain would allow her in return a highly preferential tariff. Villiers, the British agent, was reluctant : he had no authority for any such bargain, but he saw its advantages. Mendizabal overcame his scruples, and a treaty was forthwith drawn up and signed. It was then sent to Paris under flying seal for Granville to forward to Palmerston. "The Queen, Mendizabal, my private secretary, and myself," wrote Villiers, "are the only persons who have any knowledge of the transaction."

Granville was greatly scandalized. He felt the necessity for keeping such a transaction a secret was so great that he did not even allow the attachés at the Embassy to have an inkling of it. In a private letter he wrote Palmerston :

"It will not be liked here. It is already thought that Mendizabal is entirely under English influence, and this admission of English manufactures at a reduced duty, even though purchased by the guarantee of a loan, will very much confirm the impression."

In spite of his precautions the secret leaked out.[1] Louis Philippe was furious. As his Ministers were debarred

[1] "It is highly probable," remarks Sir John Hall, "that the secret was disclosed by Christina herself. Perhaps she wished to ingratiate herself with Louis Philippe, whilst by exposing Mendizabal to his wrath she may have hoped to facilitate the return to power of the *Moderados*."—*England and the Orleans Monarchy*, p. 195.

by a pledge of secrecy from any complaint to the British Ambassador, Mendizabal was warned that if such an affair went through "the Quadruple Alliance would certainly undergo modifications of a nature which Spain would regret."

When it got into Palmerston's hands he recognized instantly that such a treaty was inadmissible. England would never ratify it. A commercial treaty of another sort was therefore proposed, but Mendizabal would not hear of it, and so the matter fell through. Granville's dealings with the Duc de Broglie over this ticklish matter were the last he had with the latter as Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Ministry resigned, and M. Thiers, successful author and journalist, undertook to form a Government. The change emphasized, if it did not mark, the tendency on the part of Louis Philippe to direct his own foreign policy. Fretting at the "matrimonial blockade" which the Legitimists boasted they had established about the Orleanist monarchy, he began to devote himself to the promotion of the dynastic object nearest his heart. In Thiers he saw the man to help him.

Not long after this, affairs in Spain reached a truly bloody crisis. Mendizabal was driven from office. The Carlists everywhere prevailed. Madrid was under martial law. The Royal Guards mutinied, the Captain-General Quesada was murdered, and the unhappy Queen Regent was subjected to terrorism. While all Spain was thus in a turmoil, Louis Philippe was making overtures to Austria, and, having toadied sufficiently in one or two affairs of diplomacy, he conceived the time was ripe to demand for his eldest son the hand of an Austrian Archduchess. Metternich thought differently, and the offer was rejected.

But, angry though Louis Philippe was at this rebuff, he could not be brought to consider for a moment Thiers' plan of revenge. Thiers knew that Austria dreaded more than anything else active French intervention in Spain. His idea was to intervene, by an ingenious enlargement of the French Legion in Spain, under the command of a famous French general; but at the last moment the King vetoed the whole business. He would never be a party to giving assistance to the Spanish Jacobins —never!

The Minister's answer to this was to resign, and Granville, who had momentarily rejoiced over Thiers' adherence, was now informed that Count Molé was the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, and that henceforth France's business was to cut herself off from Spain. "We cannot expose French soldiers to the influence of Spanish revolutionary societies." Thus did France practically withdraw from the Quadruple Treaty, at the very moment when the Carlists were torn by dissensions; when the Christinos' general, Espartero, had gained a great victory, and the Moderates only needed help in men and money to re-establish peace.

No wonder the British Ministry was moved to take the unusual step of omitting the customary reference to France from the King's Speech (his last!) at the opening of Parliament in 1837. Granville reported that this "no mention" created a great sensation in Paris. Everybody recognized it as a blow—some said the death-blow —to the Anglo-French Entente.

But there are never any death-blows to the Anglo-French Entente: there are only intervals of suspended animation.

CHAPTER IX

THE EMBASSY AND A NEW REIGN

SUCH was the state of diplomatic affairs between the two countries when in England the young Queen Victoria came to the throne.

The labour and responsibilities of the British Ambassador at Paris continued to accumulate with the new reign.

"I have," wrote Charles Greville, who had run over to Paris that summer, "been riding with Lord Granville the last two days, when he talked a good deal about France and French affairs. His own position here is wonderfully agreeable because all the business of the two countries is transacted by him here and Sebastiani's is little more than a nominal embassy. This has long been the case, having begun in Canning's time; then the great intimacy which subsisted between the Duc de Broglie confirmed it during his ministry; and the principal cause of Talleyrand's hatred to Palmerston was the refusal of the latter to alter the practice when he was in England, and his mortification at finding the part he played in London to be second to that of the British Ambassador in Paris." [1]

In October of the first year of her reign the Queen herself wrote to her uncle Leopold:

"Lord Granville complains a good deal of Molé, and says that, though he is apparently very cordial

[1] Greville: *Diary* (June 25, 1837).

and friendly towards us, and talks of his desire that we should be on a better footing as to our Foreign Ministers than we have hitherto been, whenever Lord Granville urges him to do anything decisive (to use Lord G.'s own words) ' he shrinks from the discussion,' says he must have time to reflect before he can give any answer, and evades giving any reply whenever anything of importance is required. This, you see, dear Uncle, is not satisfactory. I merely tell you this, as I think you would like to know what Molé tells our Ambassador ; this differs from what he told you. What you say about Louis Philippe I am sure is very true ; his situation is a very peculiar and a very difficult one. . . ."

Next year, at the Queen's Coronation, the French King sent over a personage who proved to be very helpful to Anglo-French relations. This was Marshal Soult, whose name was first informally proposed by Louis Philippe to the British Ambassador at an evening reception.[1] The old soldier was not only delighted with his English reception, but he perceived the solid value to his country of British friendship. He believed in fully acting up to the conditions of the Quadruple Treaty, and when the Molé Ministry fell and he was again called upon to form a Cabinet, circumstances rendered it possible for him to reverse recent French policy in Spain. In that country it was Granville's opinion that Espartero was now on the road to success, and only needed a little vigorous help, especially a blockade of supplies, to settle the case of Don Carlos. Soult loyally seconded the British effort by issuing orders to the French Fleet and frontier authorities to

[1] " The King and Granville sat whispering behind a screen. The Duc d'Orléans said to me, ' A subject for H. B. ! ' "—Lady Granville : *Letters* (January 12, 1838).

co-operate actively with the other Governments against the Pretender.

By the middle of September 1839 Lord Granville received the welcome news that Don Carlos and the remnant of his followers had been driven across the frontier, and had been immediately disarmed by the French local authorities. Their leader was conveyed to Bourges, and there detained under close surveillance.[1]

In the year of Victoria's accession the Stuart de Rothesays had made a flitting appearance in Paris, and Lady Stuart, now a portly matron in her forties, came one day with her daughter Louisa to the Embassy to visit the scene of her former social triumphs.

"Lord S. won't come," records Lady Granville, in no very complimentary strain; "Betty is puzzled, opens her mouth; looks like a very hot red-and-white spaniel."

Miss Louisa Stuart (the future Lady Waterford), now a beautiful girl of twenty, had come to see her beloved birthplace, and was soon roaming over the Embassy, not failing to inspect the Princess Pauline's bedchamber, and all the familiar rooms and the garden, which was just beginning to look charming.

The two elder ladies, formerly such social rivals, had many topics, both diplomatic and domestic, to discuss. Months before someone had told Lady Granville that Louisa Stuart was about to marry a Mr. Tomline, "with £25,000 a year, handsome, agreeable, young; but

[1] Spain, however, was far from being out of her troubles. A fierce political battle arose between the *Moderados* and the *Progressistas*, in which the Queen Regent, who was anti-democratic at heart, played a dangerous game. It was love which was at last her undoing: for she had secretly married a handsome guardsman named Nunoz, and her enemies threatened to divulge the fact. She was forced to abdicate, and eventually in May 1841 Espartero, as Regent for her daughter Isabella, seized the reins of power.

THE STUART SISTERS, AFTERWARDS LADY CANNING AND LADY WATERFORD.
Born at the Embassy 1817 and 1819.

To face p. 150.

Lady Betty opposes. It is the girl's doing, but *la madre* wants rank, especially Lord Douro."

But nothing came of either project ; although money in the family would not have been despised by Lady Stuart, whose fortune had been greatly depleted by Embassy expenses and her lord's extravagance. He had always been a great collector, and brought back from France quantities of furniture, pictures, and stone and wood-carving. Amongst other things he had acquired the pick of the treasures of the Hôtel Ney "at a bargain." He had rebuilt his grandfather's—Lord Bute's—mansion at Highcliffe, near Christchurch, with her ladyship's money. Lady Betty revealed herself no longer the simple, complaisant wife of a dozen years ago. For, three years after they had left the Embassy, we find her writing to her husband a pretty sharp letter about Highcliffe and his prodigality. He had assured her the repairs there would cost only £5,000, when upon her arrival she found that at least £10,000 was still needed.

"What are we to live upon ?" she asked indignantly. "£100 a month for *everything*. I urged you to wait until you had not only paid your debts, but saved money to go upon. . . . It was no joke to deceive me as you did. Enjoy Highcliffe *if you can!* Though, in more senses than one, *at my expense!*"

The year following the Stuarts' visit to Paris her mother took Louisa to Scotland to the famous Eglinton Tournament. Here the young lady's success was so great that she would, in the opinion of many, have been proclaimed the Queen of Beauty, but for the rule that that title could only be borne by a married woman. "In the grand-stand I first saw your most beautiful

granddaughter," wrote an old friend to Lady Hardwicke, "and never did I see anything more lovely in my life. She certainly far surpassed the actual Queen of Beauty." [1]

Under such circumstances Louisa met Lord Waterford, and the acquaintance duly ripened into mutual love and a happy marriage.

We may here anticipate a little and mention Stuart de Rothesay's later career. He had long wished to repair his fortune by another embassy; after years of waiting he got his choice when the Tories came back in 1841. His old friend and countryman, Lord Aberdeen, appointed him to St. Petersburg.[2] Stuart, we are told, "after his usual fashion, left England suddenly without farewells," instructing his wife and younger daughter to follow him in the summer. Stuart, alas! was broken in more than his fortune: he had lived recklessly, his health as well as his diplomatic reputation had suffered. His fear was that at the last moment something might happen to detain him—even to cancel his appointment. He knew that the young Queen Victoria, like his enemy Palmerston, regarded him with anything but a favourable eye. His fears were not altogether groundless. When Victoria learnt that Stuart had not only been appointed to St. Petersburg, but had actually set off without kissing hands on his appointment, she was highly incensed. To Sir Robert Peel she wrote:

[1] Hare: *The Story of Two Noble Lives.*

[2] Melbourne had written privately (September 12, 1841) to the Queen that the nomination of a certain lord as Ambassador would have been "manifestly and glaringly bad," but that it did not greatly signify who is the Ambassador at Vienna, or even at St. Petersburg or Paris. Stuart de Rothesay and Strangford are not good men, either of them, but it will be difficult for Lord Aberdeen to neglect their claim altogether."

"The Queen saw in the papers that Lord Stuart de Rothesay is already gone. The Queen can hardly believe this, as no Ambassador or Minister *ever* left England without previously asking for an audience and receiving one, as the Queen wishes always to see them before they repair to their posts. Would Sir Robert be so very good as to ask Lord Aberdeen whether Lord Stuart de Rothesay is gone or not."

But Stuart had the best of reasons for waiving the ceremony, and was actually already half-way across Europe.

After he had gone Lady Betty's old tenderness for her husband returned, and she wrote him a long and loving missive, full of news and gossip (November 22, 1841), concluding with an injunction concerning his health :

"And now, my dearest, don't be angry with me if I remind you that a good many years have passed since you were in Russia ; so pray take care of yourself, as the same things may not be done with equal impunity ; and pray make acquaintance with English doctors, that you may see one if anything goes wrong."

Things unhappily did go wrong ; Stuart became afflicted with an odd sort of paralysis, in which he lost the control, not of his mental faculties, but of his legs.

"His legs," said Bloomfield, his Secretary at St. Petersburg, "ran away with him." He could not stop himself and was frequently brought up short by a lamp-post or a railing or—and this was tragic—some scandalized functionary of the Imperial Court.

He lingered on until 1844, having seen his daughter

Charlotte married to Lord Canning.[1] Lady Stuart survived until 1866, and in her old age was full of reminiscences of those wonderful days in Paris which followed Waterloo, her early married life, and the birth and childhood of her two beautiful daughters at the Embassy.

But we must return to the Granvilles and the year 1839, when grave troubles were threatening the peace of Europe, eventually bringing France and England to the verge of war. This time it was Egypt. Granville was greatly relieved when Henry Bulwer turned up as Secretary of the Embassy and chargé d'affaires during the Ambassador's absence.

"Your Majesty," wrote Melbourne afterwards to the young Queen, "knows Bulwer well. He is clever, keen, active, somewhat bitter and caustic, and rather suspicious. A man of more straightforward character would have done better, but it would be easy to have found many who would have done worse."

As it turned out, Bulwer proved of invaluable assistance to Granville and to British interests at a critical time, and, but for the accession of the Tories under Peel two or three years later, he might have been Granville's successor.

It is difficult in these pages to convey an idea of

[1] Of Lady Canning, who died in India in 1861, Lord Granville, then Foreign Secretary, wrote to her husband, so soon himself to follow her to the grave: "I can hardly believe what I have to tell them [Lady Canning's family, including her mother, Lady Stuart de Rothesay] of one of the noblest, bravest, best women that ever lived."

Lady Canning had previously written on Lady Granville's death that she was "one of the most real and affectionate friends she ever had," and recalled "her dear, kind face and happy voice."

an Ambassador's work, and the extent to which he influences international affairs, unless the political situation of the time is at least summarized.

Egypt was destined to figure very prominently in the diplomatic negotiations and international rivalries between France and England for the next half-century and more.

Just at that time, at Cairo, Mehemet Ali was bent on achieving complete independence of the Sultan, and was building up an Arab Empire which already extended from Khartum to the Persian Gulf, and threatened England's communications with the East, although Palmerston feared both French and Russian rivalry. Yet when the long preparation of armies and armaments in which both Egypt and the Porte had been indulging ended in an outbreak of war in 1839, Anglo-French official relations were, thanks largely to Soult and Granville, friendly.

Palmerston boasted: "We are in complete accord; our communications are not those of one Government with another, but of two colleagues in the same Cabinet."

This was rather overstating the case. At any rate, it was not true concerning the two peoples. Nor did this engaging cordiality exist in the French Army and Navy, as quickly appeared. The Sultan Mahmud died, and was succeeded by a son of sixteen. It had been arranged that both the French and British Fleets should work in unison to induce a suspension of hostilities and an immediate settlement of the Eastern question. What happened was that Mehemet Ali pushed forward his forces in spite of the Allies, and the Turkish admiral treacherously handed over his entire squadron to the Pasha at Alexandria. But the awkward feature of this was that the French admiral, Lalande, had raised no

finger to prevent it. Soult told Granville that he could not understand it—that Lalande's conduct was inexplicable.[1] But the explanation was simple enough, although not divulged at the time.

"Throughout the French Fleet there was," avowed the Prince de Joinville, then serving with Lalande, "a bitter hatred of England, and an intense desire to avenge former defeats. The Pasha of Egypt was regarded as the ally of France in a struggle which every man hoped and believed would take place in the near future. Admiral Lalande was, therefore, clearly justified in encouraging the Turkish admiral to surrender his fleet to Mehemet Ali."

The fact that Captain Walker and other British naval instructors in the Ottoman service were also carried off to England's enemy at Alexandria only served to increase the general satisfaction of the French Navy.

One thing was clear to Granville—the utter futility of diplomacy where it is operating, however smoothly, in a hostile national atmosphere. Unless the peoples, and particularly the members of the services, are inspired by friendliness, mere statesmanship cannot effect real co-operation.

The Ambassador was momentarily discouraged, and entertaining little hope that the French and English would unite to compel Mehemet Ali to surrender the Turkish fleet Granville, in August, turned over the Embassy to Bulwer. He and Lady Granville went off to stay with the Queen at Windsor Castle, when Her Majesty took occasion to let Granville know her views about France. What they were may be seen from her

[1] F.O.: Granville to Palmerston (July 29, 1839).

letters ; she seems to have got the idea that Granville was " too much Lord Palmerston's tool."

Palmerston just then was in splendid fighting trim. Five of the Powers had been got together and a collective note dispatched to the Pasha. It was a great stroke to have brought Russia in, but one naturally much distrusted in France and in Whig circles in England. Soult told Bulwer that it was with " feelings of painful astonishment " that he perceived " a man of such enlightened judgment as Lord Palmerston entertains it with so much complacency." But the Foreign Secretary knew what he was doing. He knew what was really in Louis Philippe's mind—that by hook or by crook the Pasha was to be helped to obtain the hereditary tenure of Egypt, Syria, and Arabia, and be quit of the Porte altogether, and that if France alone were to figure in this achievement, then farewell to future British influence in the East. Lord Holland and his Whig friends regarded the point at issue to be simply whether England should break with liberal France in order to enter into a compact with autocratic Russia. They forced Palmerston to put embarrassing safeguards in his arrangements with Russia which nullified them. Every step taken towards a settlement was shackled. Soult could not be got to move.

" In the French councils," reported Bulwer, " there is a mixture of positiveness and of vagueness—positiveness as to what will not be done and vagueness as to what may be done." [1]

Soult persisted in distrusting Russia, and continually repeated his conviction that her real object was

[1] F.O. : Bulwer to Palmerston (September 13, 1839).

to bring about a breach in Anglo-French relations. The truth is, both he and his Royal master, and a good many others besides in Europe, had formed a much higher opinion of Mehemet Ali's military power and the capacity of his army than was warranted by the facts. Palmerston was convinced that 15,000 of the best Turkish troops acting with a British fleet would be enough to force the Egyptians out of Syria, if only the French would unite their authority with that of the Powers.

Granville returned to Paris to find the Soult Cabinet beaten and out of office. The King reluctantly sent again for Thiers. Although Thiers may have been honestly desirous of a good understanding with England, yet he too pinned his faith to Mehemet Ali's military strength and the inevitability of his hold on Egypt and Syria. Consequently he was against employing any armed forces against him. There was a new French Ambassador in London to replace Sebastiani. He was none other than M. Guizot, the future Foreign Minister, already famous as an author and constitutional historian. Guizot began his ambassadorial career by reporting to Thiers that

"the British Government has two interests at stake in the Eastern question—the wish to keep Russia from Constantinople and the fear of French influence in Egypt. . . . By a singular combination of circumstances Russia is both prepared to abandon her pretensions to exercise an exclusive protectorship over the Ottoman Empire and to assist England to weaken the Pasha of Egypt. . . . Great Britain is aware, however, that in presenting her policy she may impair her good understanding with France. To retain her friendship she will make some concessions, but I am disposed to think

that she has no intention of allowing the present opportunity of attaining her ends in the East to escape."

In reply, Thiers thought that action by the Powers was to be deprecated—"the differences between France and her Allies were too marked." But there was no fear, in the present state of English politics, of England's separating herself from France on the Eastern question. How little M. Thiers knew Lord Palmerston!

Meanwhile, recognizing the importance to French interests of a separate settlement between the Porte and the Pasha, if it could somehow be brought about, Thiers did not hesitate to send a friend of his, a Paris journalist, to Constantinople on a secret mission of propaganda. This was Costa, the founder and manager of *Le Temps*. Costa at once established relations with the young Sultan's brother-in-law, Fethy Pasha, who was Minister of Commerce, and endeavoured to demonstrate to him how essential it was for the Porte to conclude promptly a peace with Mehemet Ali. England, he said, had her own Machiavellian reasons for wishing the Sultan to make war upon the Pasha. The idea that it would be better that England should herself take Egypt than that it should continue in the hands of the Sultan's rebellious vassal was a most dangerous doctrine. "What England takes," hinted this journalist, darkly, "she keeps."

Nor was this all—France had other agents in both Cairo and Constantinople endeavouring to annul any measures taken by the Powers. Luckily their intrigues became known to the Paris Embassy. Palmerston saw that there was nothing to be done with France, and that a clear break need no longer be delayed. Were England to abandon the Sultan because of France's

lack of co-operation, Russia would resume her old "separate and isolated position" towards Turkey. Such a division would divide the Ottoman Empire into two separate and distinct States, one of which would be a dependency of France and the other a satellite of Russia. England would be not only out in the cold, but her position in India endangered. Rather than consent to this, Palmerston declared he would throw up his portfolio. His colleagues hesitated, but surrendered; and without any further consultation with M. Guizot, on July 15 a convention for the "pacification of the Levant" was signed by the plenipotentiaries of Great Britain, Russia, Austria, and Prussia on the one hand, and that of Turkey on the other. It was France who was thus left out in the cold.

When the news reached the Tuileries it created consternation. Perfidious—thrice-perfidious Lord Palmerston! But, as Palmerston explained to Granville, it was the only course that could have been taken. "Secrecy was essential. France would never have taken any part in coercing Mehemet Ali, and would have certainly warned him of any naval or military measures which the Allies planned against him."

What made Louis Philippe and Thiers particularly sore was the secret manner in which England had acted—the callous lack of consideration for the feelings of France. Bulwer, who went to the Palace, expected an explosion, but Thiers kept his temper admirably. "Ah, Mr. Bulwer," exclaimed the King, "I know you wished to read me a lesson. I know it; but"—here he shook his Royal forefinger—"it may be a perilous one for all parties!"

When on the 27th the news was published in the Paris Press, there was an instant panic on the Bourse

and a heavy fall of stocks. The convention was declared to be an insult to France, which must be wiped out in blood. On August 1 a Royal ordinance was published making increases in both the Army and the Navy. Anglophobia again seized the populace, and Lord Granville, absent on holiday and in failing health, made haste to return to his post.

At this crisis it must be remarked that Thiers the demagogue, in his newspaper *Le National*, fulminating bellicosely against England, and M. Thiers in his capacity of Foreign Minister were (as he was soon to mention to Bulwer) two different personages. He wrote to Guizot that England had been led astray: "she did not realize the magnitude of the task she had embarked upon," "her Foreign Minister must be reasoned with," etc.

"Treat Lord Palmerston as he has treated you. Question him boldly. Ask him whether he has any plans for aiding a rising in Syria, and what he proposes to do if the Pasha flatly refuses the Sultan's proposals. Press him hard. Place him in the position of having to confess that he has acted in a very foolhardy fashion. Take care, however," he added, "to frame your questions in such a way that, in case he refuses to answer, you will not be forced to break off relations. For at present France must restrain herself."

But Palmerston was accustomed to be pressed hard, and Guizot, for all his persuasiveness, was not able to swerve him by a hairbreadth. France's isolation was of her own doing, greatly as the fact offended Louis Philippe and excited his subjects.

"I say now of the treaty of July 15," the King wrote to his son-in-law, Leopold of Belgium, then staying at Windsor Castle,

" that it is more than a blunder ; it is a misfortune of which the consequences are incalculable. The situation is particularly painful for me, who have always scouted the idea that England could ever enter into an alliance without France. I find I am wrong. For the present we can only wait and see. But there is one thing we must do, and that is to arm, and we are doing that vigorously. Our rule must be one of expectation. We must see what England means to do before deciding what France shall do either in the way of restoring or preserving the balance of power." [1]

Meanwhile both Granville and Bulwer had been gathering information and sending to Palmerston accounts of French naval and military activity. One could not tell how far French resentment might go. Admiral Stopford, commanding the Mediterranean Squadron, had already been ordered to cut off all sea communication between Egypt and Syria, and to intercept any movement of the Pasha's fleet. He was particularly charged to beware of " any sudden movement of the French squadron, in consequence of orders which might be sent from Paris, under the first impulse of irritation which the French Government would naturally feel at finding itself placed in a separate and isolated position."

Indeed, in some quarters of Europe war between France and England was considered certain. Thiers, while denying to Bulwer such a contingency, nevertheless indulged amongst his intimates in perpetual talk of war. By the middle of September a Royal ordinance decreed the long-planned fortifications of Paris. Louis Philippe seemed even more bellicose than his Ministers. At the Tuileries he loudly and bitterly reproached the Prussian and Austrian Ambassadors for

[1] Sir J. R. Hall : *England and the Orleans Monarchy.*

the ungrateful conduct of their Courts towards him. While all Europe had been seething in revolutionary ideas *he* had fought their battle—for ten years *he* had held the revolutionaries in check. "But," he cried so loudly that Bulwer could hear, "they had better not provoke me too far. I have discarded the red cap. Some day perhaps they might be disagreeably surprised to find that I have resumed it." As for the Duc d'Orléans, the King's eldest son, he told everybody that France had been insulted. He was a soldier, and, "if the worst came to the worst, he had rather be killed in action than be shot in a street fight and die in the gutter."

Matters came to such a pass that Bulwer was warned that the mob were plotting an attack upon the British Embassy. Bands of idle men marched through the Faubourg St. Honoré singing the *Marseillaise*, and cursing, as they had cursed a thousand times before, and doubtless will curse often again, *le perfide Albion*.

In the midst of all this there arrived from Cairo an appeal from Mehemet Ali invoking the protection and mediation of France. He declared he was ready to accept from the Sultan the governorship of the chief Syrian provinces for the lifetime of his son, and yield up Crete, the Holy Cities, and Adana at once. The hereditary tenure of Egypt he could not, however, bring himself to abandon. Thiers professed to believe that in this proposal lay the basis for a peaceful settlement.

He had always been very friendly in his intercourse with Bulwer. He now decided to try the effect of a veiled threat. Bulwer had ridden down on September 8 to see the Minister at the beautiful château he occupied at Auteuil.

"I found him walking up and down in a long room or gallery, and I joined him in his perambulations. After a turn or two he stopped and said: 'I have dispatches from Walewski. [The Count had been sent to Egypt on a special mission to Mehemet Ali.] He has terminated his negotiations with the Pasha.' Thiers stated that France considered the conditions acceptable to the Pasha quite just and reasonable. 'If your Government will act with us in persuading the Sultan and the other Powers to accept them, there is once more a *cordiale entente* between us.' If England refused, France felt 'bound to support him.'

"'With these words he fixed his eyes on my countenance, and added gravely: '*Vous comprenez, mon cher, la gravité de ce que je viens de dire?*' 'Perfectly,' I said, with an intentional air of imperturbability. 'You wish me to understand that if we accept the arrangement made through Walewski you and we are the best friends in the world; if not, you mean to declare for the Pasha and go to war with us in his favour.'"

This coolness rather took Thiers aback, and he hastened to observe that he had spoken to his visitor as Thiers the private citizen and not as Thiers the Prime Minister. Bulwer thanked him for making the distinction, and said he would ride back to the Embassy and draw up a dispatch recounting the conversation, and return with it for M. Thiers' approval.

Bulwer accordingly returned to the Embassy and drew up a dispatch to Palmerston beginning thus:

"My Lord:

"You know that I have more than once said that M. Thiers, in the awkward position in which affairs have placed him, will endeavour to find some moment at which he may say to the King, 'You must follow me even to war, if I think proper, or I will leave you

exposed to public opinion as expressed by the newspapers.'"

The British chargé d'affaires went on to say that, on such a basis, the King would unhesitatingly accept M. Thiers' resignation.

Thiers read the proposed dispatch, and then said reproachfully: "My dear Bulwer, how can you so deceive yourself? You spoil a promising career. The King is much more warlike than I am. Don't send this dispatch. Let Lord Palmerston know what you think of our conversation." Bulwer agreed, and re-cast his dispatch; but in a private and confidential letter said that he now believed Thiers really desired peace.

Palmerston chuckled over Bulwer's letter:

"If," he wrote, "Thiers should again hold to you the language of menace, however indistinctly and vaguely shadowed out, pray retort upon him to the full extent of what he may say to you, and with that skill of language which I know you to be the master of, convey to him in the most friendly and inoffensive manner possible that if France throws down the gauntlet we shall pick it up; and that if she begins a war she will to a certainty lose her ships, colonies, and commerce before she sees the end of it; that her army of Algiers will cease to give her anxiety, and that Mehemet Ali will just be chucked into the Nile." [1]

Palmerston, in this mood, was engagingly downright.

Yet all this time "Pam" was being terribly beset by his colleagues in the Cabinet, and by all the so-called French party in and out of Parliament, to change his "fatal" policy. He was very nearly "chucked" out of the Cabinet. But amidst all the excitement of faction

[1] September 22, 1840. Bulwer: *Life of Palmerston.*

in two capitals he stood his ground. He scouted the idea of war with France. He could not admit that the French people or the French King would ever allow any Government to fight the whole of Europe in order that Mehemet Ali should keep Syria. While he was thus defending his policy to the Queen and his colleagues action had replaced words in the East. The Sultan had formally deposed his rebellious viceroy, and a blockade of both Egypt and Syria was begun by the Allies. Beyrout, hotly bombarded, fell. Ibrahim retired helplessly before the Allies.

When intelligence of this reached Paris the excitement reached fever-heat. France took it as an intolerable national rebuff. "The cannon of Beyrout," wrote the poet Heine, then in Paris, "re-echoes painfully in the heart of every Frenchman."

Louis Philippe privately informed Leopold that the French populace were getting out of hand in their hatred of England.

"Our people are persuaded that England wishes to reduce France to the rank of a secondary Power. . . . The more I believe that the union of England and France is the basis of the repose of the world, the more I regret to see so much irritation excited between our two nations.

"It is this *abaissement* of France which now sticks in their throats."

The young Duke of Orleans was credited with the new national watchword, "*Plutôt périr que de souffrir cette ignominie.*"

But there was no ignominy at all for France in the situation. Egypt was just an excuse for the national

effervescence. As that close and just student of his country, Balzac, had lately avowed :

" Il est dans le caractère français de s'enthousiasmer, de se colèrer, de se passioner pour le météore du moment, pour les bâtons flottants de l'actualité. Les êtres collectifs, les peuples, seraient-ils donc sans mémoire ? " [1]

With astonishing firmness and political astuteness for a girl of twenty-one, Victoria wrote to her uncle September 26, 1840 :

" I have seen your letters to Palmerston, and his answer to you, and I also send you a paper from Lord Melbourne. I assure you that I *do* give these affairs my *most serious* attention : it would be, indeed, *most* desirable if France *could come back to us*, and I think what Metternich suggests very sagacious and well judged. You must allow me to state that *France* has *put herself* into this unfortunate state. I know (as I saw *all* the *papers*) how she was engaged to join us—and I know how strangely she refused ; I know also that France *agrees* in the *principle*, but only doubts the *efficacy* of the measures. Where, then, is *' La France outragée '* ? Wherefore arm when there is no enemy ? Wherefore raise the war-cry ? But this has been done, and has taken *more* effect that I think the French Government *now* like ; and *now* she has to undo all this and to calm the general agitation and excitement, which is not so easy. Still, though France is in the wrong, and *quite* in the wrong, still France should be pacified and should again take her place amongst the five Powers. I am sure she might easily do this. . . ." [2]

[1] *Eugénie Grandet.*

[2] King Leopold thus replied to his niece : " I cannot disguise from you that the consequences may be very serious, and the more so as the Thiers Ministry is supported by the movement party, and as reckless of consequences as your own Minister for Foreign Affairs—

Granville officially informed M. Thiers that the deposition of Mehemet Ali was "merely a measure of coercion," and would not be persisted in should the Pasha "at an early moment accept the conditions of the treaty."

The excited state of public opinion in France was, however, not lost upon the Melbourne Ministry. Lord John Russell continued to believe war imminent. He insisted on a Cabinet Council being summoned on October 10, at which he intended to propose that "Instructions should be sent to Lord Granville to ascertain from the French Government what terms France would consider satisfactory for the immediate arrangement of the affairs of the East." But a delay in meeting occurred. Finally, on the 16th, in consequence of Thiers' two dispatches, it was settled that Palmerston should write "to urge the Porte not to dispossess Mehemet Ali finally of Egypt."

"I believe the other Foreign Ministers at Constantinople will receive similar instructions; this dispatch Palmerston will send to Granville (to-night, I believe) to be communicated to Thiers, and I have made Palmerston *promise* to put into the dispatch to Granville 'that it would be a source of great satisfaction to England if this would be the cause of bringing back France to that alliance (with the other four Powers) from which we have seen her depart with so much regret.'" [1]

even much more so, as Thiers himself would not be sorry to see everything existing upset. He is strongly impregnated with all the notions of fame and glory which belonged to part of the Republican and the Imperial times: he would not even be much alarmed at the idea of a Convention ruling again France, as he thinks that *he* would be the *man* to *rule* the Assembly, and told me last year that he thinks it for France perhaps the most *powerful* form of government."

[1] Victoria to Leopold (October 16, 1840).

Granville, meanwhile, had had evidence of the warlike plans of M. Thiers. On October 12 he received information, from a person who stipulated for a money reward, that the French Government was about to seize one of the Balearic Islands belonging to Spain. This *coup*, besides its effect on Spain and upon opinion in the absolutist Courts, who were against Espartero and the Radicals, would give France control of the Western Mediterranean. Granville immediately sent off a special messenger to the Embassy at Madrid to warn his friend, Aston. A remonstrance to Louis Philippe was in order, but that monarch was already undergoing a profound change of heart. On October 13 he had been shot at by a would-be assassin, who declared that he was by profession "a conspirator and an exterminator of tyrants." [1] It seemed clear that the outbreak of a foreign war would be followed by revolution at home. The *bourgeoisie*, as well as the aristocracy, were fast growing alarmed. Still his chief Minister, Thiers, continued to press for war. He drew up a Speech from the Throne which, among other things, announced the calling of 150,000 more men to the colours. Louis Philippe flatly refused its terms, and Thiers again resigned. Soult was again sent for, and agreed to form a Ministry in conjunction with Guizot, who was to be replaced in the London Embassy by Baron Bourqueney.[2]

[1] Lady Granville wrote: "What a frightful attempt yesterday against the life of the King! What gratitude we owe God to have spared his life and also that of his country, and perhaps all Europe, from incalculable misfortunes!"

Croker wrote to Lord Brougham: "Poor Louis Philippe lives the life of a mad dog, and will soon, I fear, suffer the death of that general object of every man's shot."

[2] The situation which Guizot had to face was completely changed by the fall of Acre, the overthrow of Mehemet Ali's forces and his

The Thiers regime had plunged France into grave difficulties; it had administered a blow to the prestige of the Orleans monarchy from which the latter never recovered.

"If," wrote Palmerston, "we had yielded to France on this occasion, we should have made her the dictator of Europe, and her insolence would have known no bounds; and we should soon have had to quarrel with her upon some matter directly affecting the interests or the honour of the two countries, and upon which perhaps neither party would have been able with honour to give way."

At the same time it was also true, as he stated to the Queen (November 11, 1840):

"Your Majesty may be assured that there is in France an immense mass of persons, possessed of property, and engaged in pursuits of industry, who are decidedly averse to unnecessary war, and determined to oppose revolution. And although those persons have not hitherto come prominently forward, yet their voice would have made itself heard, when the question of peace or unprovoked war came practically to be discussed."

Apropos of the anti-French feeling aroused on the Continent:

"M. Thiers," wrote Metternich, "likes to be compared to Napoleon. With respect to Germany he resembles him closely; indeed, he may justly be said to surpass

submission to the Porte. As a result of this the Sultan, with great reluctance and only under pressure from the Powers, consented to grant his brother-vassal the hereditary *pashalik* of Egypt.

him. In six weeks he has accomplished as much in that country as the Emperor during ten years of war and oppression."

Granville, whose ambassadorial career was now approaching its end, continued to report the difficulties which the French Ministers were meeting with in placating public opinion. For France, face to face with a *fait accompli* in the East, could only hold herself aloof. The building of the fortifications of Paris, costing a hundred and fifty million francs, greatly helped to keep the populace quiet while Guizot pursued his task of bringing his country back into the European concert. This was finally accomplished in the following July, when the plenipotentiaries of all the Powers, including France, signed the Convention of the Straits, by which they pledged their countries to uphold the principle of the closing of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to the warships of the Powers. Thus, in this measure, the isolation of France came to an end. It also proved to be nearly the final act of the Melbourne Ministry. The elections of 1841 went against them, and Peel returned to power, and a change was made in the Embassy at Paris.

For some time Granville's health had been bad. He had suffered a serious fall from his horse, and this may have precipitated the paralytic strokes which followed. But the strain upon him during the past year or two had been very great, and in the spring of 1841 he became seriously ill. Even, therefore, if Melbourne had retained office, there would have had to be a change in the Paris Embassy. Lady Granville carried off her sick husband to Rome: she felt that she had played her part and was ready to yield to another.

The only one who really grieved at parting was her daughter, Lady Georgiana. It is easy to imagine the melancholy she felt at having to leave the beautiful abode of her childhood, where she had grown up, where she had lived as a young woman, where she had been married, and where her child had been born. We may say more : the Embassy was the place where her intelligence had been awakened to new worlds, and where her thoughts, though as yet vaguely, had been turned in a direction presaging an immense spiritual change. It was dear to her from every point of view. With a full heart, then, did Lady Georgiana pen the following lines, which contain a touching tribute to her love of the place and also to her stricken sire :

ON LEAVING THE BRITISH EMBASSY AT PARIS IN 1841

Farewell, old house ! my ears will never more
Rejoice in the glad sound I loved so well,
When at the journey's end thy opening door
Rolled back to greet me, and my heart would swell
And bound with speechless rapture in my breast ;
Exulting in the thought of hours to come
Fraught with sweet converse and with welcome rest
'Midst all the genial sympathies of home.
Of thee a final mournful leave I take,
Long as my life, and on this parting day
My eyes o'erflow. I weep for thy dear sake
Of vanish'd joys and sorrows passed away.
A child I came to thy wide spacious halls,
Play'd on thy greensward, wander'd in thy bowers,
My girlish dreams were dreamt within thy walls
And years flew by like a few fleeting hours.
Since then all that mark'd life with earnest stress,
Each strong emotion, each momentous change—
More than I dare to dwell on or express,

Of thought expanding to a wider range—
Through joy, through suffering, through experience won
With thee are blended, link'd for evermore;
But chiefly, tenderly, will memory run
On one dear spot, where I would fain live o'er
Days full of happiness, too great for earth:
Thy room, my mother! Shall we e'er again
Renew those communings in grief and mirth—
Those free outpourings of each joy or pain—
That reading, thinking, dreaming, side by side,
That ceaseless converse, whether sad or gay,
Which still was sweet, and when the heart was tried,
Lighten'd its burthen, and chased gloom away?
God knows! The future may be dark or fair,
But never what the past has been to me.

Farewell, dear house! a parting leaf I tear
From mem'ry's book, and as I sadly see
Thy doors close on me, one blest thought renews
Grateful emotion and a filial pride,
That through the bygone years my heart reviews,
Spent 'neath thy roof and by my father's side,
I still beheld him labouring for one end,
Peace between two great nations to maintain,
England's true son, and yet to France a friend—
For this he lived and did not live in vain:
Erewhile, when the dense clouds of discord rose
And war's dark vision showed its hateful form,
Threat'ning both kingdoms with impending woes,
To him was given to allay the storm.
Strong in his native rectitude of heart,
His fearless truthfulness by none denied,
And honesty, the statesman's highest art,
'Twas his to mediate, reconcile, and guide—
And on the surging waters balm to throw.[1]

Rumours had previously reached the Granvilles that

[1] A MS. copy of this poem is in the possession of the present Lord Granville.

Lord Londonderry was to succeed at the Embassy: Lord Jersey's name also was mentioned. Lady Granville notes (September 30):

"Lord Castlereagh says, 'My father [Londonderry] wishes for Paris and *must* have it!' Lady Jersey, 'Either Paris or Vienna will satisfy *us*.'"

But, as we shall see, neither of those noblemen was to be Lord Granville's successor.

CHAPTER X

THE FIRST LORD COWLEY

"UPON the subject of diplomatic appointments," Lord Melbourne wrote privately the Queen, he desired "to make one general observation which he thinks of importance. Upon a change of Government a very great and sudden change of all or many of the Ministers at foreign Courts is an evil, and to be avoided, inasmuch as it induces an idea of a general change of policy and disturbs everything that has been settled. George III always set his face against and discouraged such numerous removals, as tending to shake confidence abroad in the Government generally, and to give it a character of uncertainty and instability. It would be well if Your Majesty could make this remark to Lord Aberdeen."

In the case of Paris, Lord Granville's illness had, as has been related, made a change imperative. In choosing his successor the new Foreign Minister could hardly overlook the claims of the elderly diplomat who had already nominally served as Ambassador for a few days in 1834. Henry Wellesley, Lord Cowley, was, moreover, a brother of the Duke of Wellington, in whose Ministry Aberdeen had already served. The only question was whether Cowley was not too old and infirm. Princess Lieven, writing from Paris to Earl Grey (August 6, 1841), said that "Cowley's appointment would be agreeable at Paris, but fear his health is too bad." Any such doubts were settled by Cowley

himself, who declared that he "never was so well in his life." He had, besides, long looked forward to spending his closing years in Paris. To Paris, accordingly, he went.

With him went Lady Cowley (*née* Cecil) and their daughter. The new Ambassadress was Cowley's second wife, his first having been divorced for an *affaire* with the Marquess of Anglesey, which cost the latter nobleman £24,000 in damages. Lady Cowley was a model of propriety, fully imbued with those principles of conduct which had already revolutionized English Society since the young Queen's accession. She sent for the visiting list of the Embassy, and proceeded to edit it. Certain notorious names were expunged. At her parties and receptions the rake and the adventuress were conspicuous by their absence. In fact, only those English ladies who had been presented at Court were received at her teas and *soirées*. It is due to Lady Granville to say that she had made it a rule never to make any presentations of Englishwomen to the French Court. If they sought the *entrée* they must apply elsewhere.

Naturally there was consternation in certain circles in Paris, but Lady Cowley held to her course, and in the opinion of her generous-minded predecessor was fully justified. A couple of seasons later (March 1843) Lady Granville wrote from Rome :

"I believe Lady Cowley's unpopularity to be chiefly with those who are offended by her reforms in society, which all tell me have been very great improvements. She is a hundred times a better Ambassadress than I was, perhaps a *more stormy blown*." [1]

A quarter of a century before, Cowley's brother, the

[1] By this odd phrase Lady Granville probably meant to signify "more adventurous."

Iron Duke, had begun his embassy by broaching the subject of a treaty with France on the Slave Trade with Louis XVIII and his Ministers.

Since then two separate engagements had been entered into—in 1831 and 1834—for the purpose of suppressing this iniquitous traffic. Under their provisions French and English cruisers were empowered to stop and overhaul any suspected vessel of either nationality. But this measure was not wide enough, and Palmerston, whose hatred of the slave trade was intense, had finally succeeded in persuading the other Powers to agree to a new convention. One was drawn up, but, owing to Guizot's personal hostility to the English Minister, he managed to delay matters so that Palmerston should not enjoy the credit.[1] On Lord Aberdeen's succession, Guizot's tactics changed, and in December 1841 the treaty was signed in London. But the business was not to be concluded so easily. As Louis XVIII had told Wellington, the opposition to slavery had never been so keen in France as in England, and now the French Deputies and the Paris Press set up the cry that this was all a new stratagem by which England was to carry out her arrogant policy of controlling the seas. The convention could not therefore be ratified at present. For nearly a year the protocol was kept open in the hope of a change in public opinion, and then Lord Cowley was informed that France would withdraw from the arrangements.[2]

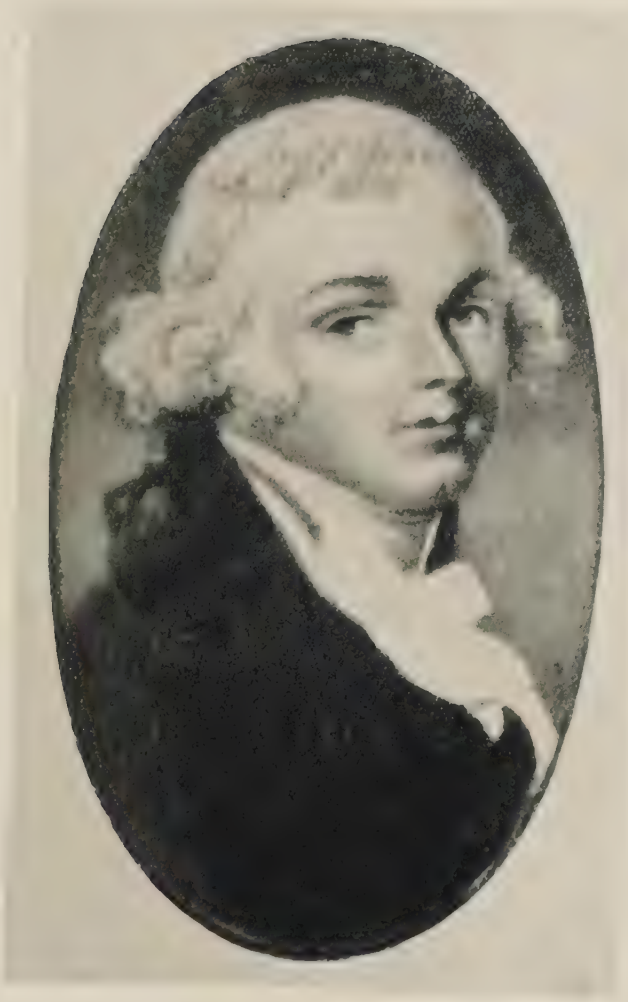
[1] "Guizot behaved very badly about refusing to sign the Slave Trade Treaty, which they had so long ago settled to do: it is unwise and foolish to irritate the late Government, who may so easily come in again: for Palmerston will *not* forgive *nor* forget offences, and then France would be worse off than before with England."—Victoria to Leopold (September 8, 1841).

[2] Three years later an agreement was arrived at and the treaty

This was a bad beginning. But Cowley's chief attention was destined to be absorbed by the difficulties of the two countries with respect to Spain. Paris had become a hot-bed of Spanish intrigue. Queen Christina, who in 1840 had been driven into exile in favour of Espartero, her successor as Regent, had taken a house in the Rue de Courcelles, which quickly became a resort for all her partisans. Moreover, Christina had made up her mind that the time had come to find a husband for her daughter, Queen Isabella, although the latter was now only twelve years old. She had first thought of an English prince, and then successively a member of the Saxe-Coburg family and the Archduke Charles of Austria. All these projects, especially the latter, had to be abandoned.

It soon appeared that the King of the French secretly cherished some ideas of his own on this interesting subject. Believing that the Constitutionalists had triumphed at Madrid and the Spanish throne to be fairly stabilized, he thought his son would make an excellent husband for little Isabella. He also thought that an alliance between the Spanish Bourbons and the House of Orleans would be an excellent thing for the House of Orleans and also, of course, for France. Albeit, his hints to Isabella were not at first very successful. She had, she intimated, " other views for her daughter," but inasmuch as she was just now living in Paris and anxious to obtain Louis Philippe's support for her schemes to oust Espartero, she was clearly obliged to be very tactful. Lord Cowley soon came to share Bulwer's fixed opinion that a compact existed between

of May 29, 1845, followed in spirit the previous conventions, save that in African waters the right of search should be exercised by a joint Anglo-French squadron.



HENRY WELLESLEY (LORD COWLEY).
Ambassador, 1843–1846.
(*From a miniature*, 1790.)

To face p. 178.

the King and Christina on the subject of Isabella's marriage.

Victoria made no secret of her own views. She wrote to Aberdeen :

" The Queen must say that she fears the French are at the bottom of it, for their jealousy of our influence in Spain is such that the Queen fears that they would not be indisposed to see civil war to a certain degree restored rather than Spain should go on quietly supported by us. . . . The French intrigues should certainly be frustrated."

And again on October 17 :

" The Queen Christina's residence at Paris is very suspicious and much to be regretted ; everyone who saw the Queen and knew her when Regent knew her to be clever and *capable* of governing had she but attended to her duties. This she did not, but wasted her time in frivolous amusements and neglected her children sadly, and finally left them."

Victoria was

" certain that Lord Aberdeen will feel with her of what importance it is to England that Spain should not become subject to French interests, as it is evident that *France wishes* to make it. The marriage of Queen Isabella is a most important question, and the Queen is likewise certain that Lord Aberdeen sees at once that we could never let her marry a French prince."

When the insurrection against Espartero broke out in October 1841, and was promptly crushed, suspicion at once fell on the French Government, and the Spanish Regent called upon Louis Philippe to expel Christina

from France. The request was promptly refused, and the relations between the two countries became strained. It was because of a trumpery dispute over diplomatic etiquette, however, that the French Ambassador withdrew from Madrid. Louis Philippe denied to Lord Cowley that he had ever intended one of his sons as a candidate for the hand of Isabella. Nevertheless, he should object to her marriage with any prince who did not belong to either the Spanish or the Neapolitan branch of the Bourbon family. This certainly rather narrowed the field of choice; but the British Ministry altogether failed to recognize the right of the French King to dispose of the hand of the young Spanish sovereign. It was, said Lord Aberdeen, "an exclusively Spanish affair, which ought to be regulated solely by considerations affecting the happiness of the Queen and the welfare of her people." Exactly—was the French reply—and these conditions would be admirably fulfilled by her marriage with a French prince. Possibly, retorted Aberdeen, but a union of the Queen of Spain with a son of Louis Philippe would upset the balance of power, and would thus inevitably meet with England's opposition, and not England's alone.

Shortly after Lord Cowley's arrival in Paris he had a visit at the Embassy from the Queen Mother's confidential adviser, Count Toreno. He came more than once, and each time he stated definitely that Christina would prefer a Coburg to a Bourbon prince for her son-in-law. At the same time the Ambassador perceived signs that Louis Philippe's mind was now made up—that he would not hear of any but a Bourbon husband for Isabella, and even, in Cowley's opinion, harboured serious thoughts of supporting his pretensions by force

of arms.[1] At present he thought to gain his ends by secret methods. So began the long course of intrigue and chicanery which six years later brought about the downfall of the Orleans dynasty.

In July 1842 all Paris was startled to hear that the Duke of Orleans, Louis Philippe's eldest son, who had been such a frequent visitor to the Embassy, and whose marriage had occasioned such rejoicings five years before, had been thrown from his phaëton near the Porte Maillot and mortally injured. He was the father of the future Comte de Paris, and his death was a great grief to the King and Queen.

In the King's household at this time was a certain General Athalin, whose relations with Madame Adelaide, the King's sister, were notorious. Athalin was also a friend and confidant of Christina. An insurrection against Espartero broke out in Barcelona in November 1842. Lord Cowley had proofs that the Queen-Mother had supplied the revolutionaries with money, and that Athalin had had repeated communications with the plotters in Paris and Spain. The French Consul at Barcelona was particularly implicated. He bore the name of Ferdinand de Lesseps—a name afterwards famous in another connection. The connection between civil engineering and political conspiracy is not obvious: it is probable that young Lesseps was merely seeking an outlet for his mental exuberance. Cowley was, however, requested to suggest that he was a danger, and to express the hope to M. Guizot that the French Government would "no longer retain him in the place where his undue activity had been displayed." Louis Philippe refused. Lesseps had been extremely useful in the latest blow against the Regent, whose power was

[1] Cowley to Aberdeen (May 6, 1842).

now seen at last to be tottering. Capable as he was, he had to fight too many foes at once. The army deserted their former idol, and at length, in July of the following year, Espartero fell.

Yet he might never have fallen if, as Louis Philippe had confided to the British Ambassador in Paris, he had worked for the young Queen's marriage to a Bourbon. This was the policy which would have brought him the support of France. Cowley afterwards came to the conclusion that the idea had something to recommend it on the score of European peace, and as time went on Aberdeen was to share his views. Palmerston, with the stoutest patriotism in the world, had done not a little to draw England and France apart: something was now needed to draw them together. That something was afforded by the visit which Queen Victoria paid to the French King at Eu in September. Ostensibly it was a purely social affair, but as both M. Guizot and Lord Aberdeen were the respective Ministers in attendance, it gave all parties an opportunity to promote a mutual accord.[1] On the return of both monarchs the cordiality was manifest in several directions, and one effect was greatly to lighten Lord Cowley's duties.

[1] Aberdeen afterwards wrote: "With respect to the Infanta, they [the King and Guizot] both declared in the most positive and explicit manner that *until the Queen was married and had children* they should consider the Infanta precisely as her sister, and that any marriage with a French prince would be entirely out of the question. The King said that he did not wish that his son should have the prospect of being on the throne of Spain: but that, if the Queen had children by whom the succession would be secured, he did not engage to preclude himself from the possibility of profiting by the great inheritance which the Infanta would bring his son. All this, however, was uncertain, and would require time at all events to accomplish: for I distinctly understood that it was not only a

In the Speech from the Throne of both monarchs in 1844 reference was made to the Entente Cordiale between the two countries. But Cowley was under no illusions. He was too well aware of the fixity of Louis Philippe's secret purpose, the activities of the demagogues, and the fickle character of French public opinion to hope for any long continuance of diplomatic repose. Besides, there was always the Spanish danger; and indeed the year was not out before England and the country to which he was accredited were again at loggerheads. This time the trouble came from a most unexpected quarter. A French admiral established a French protectorate over the island of Tahiti. The British Consul, an ex-missionary, Pritchard by name, was so far roused by this proceeding as to instigate the local sovereign, Queen Pomare, to demand English protection. The result of this was that the choleric admiral, who rejoiced in the name of Dupetit-Thouars, landed troops, deposed the Queen, and hoisted the French flag over the island. As if this were not enough, Pritchard's contumely was rewarded by his being seized and imprisoned for four days in the dungeon of a block-house. He was then expelled from Tahiti.

The whole of this business had taken some months in the doing, and it had given an excellent opportunity for testing the strength of the Entente Cordiale. In the midst of it, while English public opinion was indignant and the Chauvinistic Deputies were fulminating in the Chamber, the King's own son, the Prince de Joinville, deemed the occasion opportune to publish a pamphlet on the "Naval Forces of France" with special relation to a war with England! To do the King justice,

marriage and a child, but *children*, that were *necessary to secure the succession.*"

he had had no hand in the publication, and was greatly disconcerted at his son's imprudence. Nevertheless, it was hardly reassuring, when Morocco gave offence to the French in Algiers, that the punitive squadron sent against the Emperor of Morocco should be commanded by this same Prince de Joinville.

The news from Tahiti came and plunged both countries into excitement. " Never since I have been in this country," wrote the French Ambassador in London, " have I seen anything to equal it." . . . If England were aroused, one can imagine the state of affairs in Paris. The Paris Press, reported Cowley, called loudly on the Government to stand by its officers and to refuse England any kind of reparation, even at the risk of war. At the Opera, *Charles VI* was tactfully produced, which afforded the Parisians an invariably welcome opportunity for making the roof ring with hearty cries of *" A bas l'Angleterre."*

Clearly this was a time for great caution. Guizot took refuge in silence. " The greater the excitement the more necessary it becomes to allow it time to cool down." Aberdeen, too, was in no hurry ; but Pritchard's return to England, with the story of his grievances and French aggression, rendered further delay impossible. He told Cowley to see M. Guizot, and give him to understand that, unless satisfaction in some shape were voluntarily offered, he must transmit " a formal and detailed " demand for redress.

On the heels of this came the news from Morocco that Tangier had been bombarded by the French.

Truly, both to Cowley as he drove to the Tuileries and to the Comte de Jarnac on his way to Downing Street, it appeared as if war between England and France were this time inevitable. Despite the counsels

of their rulers, the French had been working for it, and they must have their own way. Cowley, acting on his instructions, told M. Guizot that the attack upon Tangier, after his repeated assurances that it would be respected under all circumstances, had greatly surprised the British Government. "Any occupation of the coast of Morocco could not fail to be viewed in a very serious light by Great Britain, and must lead to evils of great magnitude."

Guizot took it all calmly. It would be "a disgrace were the peace of the world to be disturbed on account of Pritchard, Pomare, and d'Aubigny." But the affair had long since passed beyond the scope of these comparatively trivial personalities. It was fast passing out of the control of Aberdeen,[1] Guizot, and the rulers of both countries. Cowley learnt that the King and the officers of the French Navy were furious over letters in *The Times* from British naval officers who had witnessed the Tangier bombardment, questioning the seamanship of Joinville and the fighting qualities of the French sailors.

The danger had been, in Queen Victoria's own words, "imminent"—the two countries were for weeks on the brink of war—but again the war-cloud passed. Guizot agreed to pay Pritchard a pecuniary indemnity, and the offending admiral was censured, in the nick of time. As for Morocco, Marshal Bugeaud had won a decisive battle over the Moors, and Joinville had de-

[1] "Palmerston dislikes Aberdeen and has a low opinion of him. He thinks him weak and timid, and likely to let down the character and influence of the country. Your Majesty knows that Lord Melbourne does not partake these opinions, certainly not at least to anything like the extent to which Lord Palmerston carries them."—Melbourne to Queen Victoria (January 17, 1842).

stroyed, the forts at Mogador. French honour being thus satisfied, and both commanders having received orders not to prosecute the campaign any farther than was necessary, a peace was patched up, and the French army and fleet returned to Algiers.

A few weeks later, notwithstanding all the storm, Louis Philippe deemed the moment propitious to return the visit Queen Victoria had paid him the year before. He was the first French King to come on a visit to the sovereign of England. Eight centuries before a reigning Norman Duke had paid such a visit with fatal effects to the English dynasty. This time the motive was purely pacific, and the loyal English accorded a cordial welcome to their Queen's guest.

In Paris Queen Christina had packed up her belongings and returned to Spain. With the downfall of Espartero and the execution, by Ramon Narvaez, the Captain-General of Castile, of two hundred Liberal politicians, Spain had virtually returned to absolutism. Parliamentary government was all but suspended, although the Cortés had been constrained to put an end to the Regency question by declaring Queen Isabella's minority at an end, although she was not yet fourteen.

The question of providing this unhappy little Queen with a suitable husband once more began to occupy the attention of thrones and Chancelleries.

"I believe," wrote Cowley, "that Louis Philippe is thinking of the marriage of Montpensier [his youngest son] with the sister of Isabella." The King's candidate for the Spanish throne was the Count Trapani, the brother of the Bourbon King of Naples—a dull and ill-favoured youth of sixteen, educated by the Jesuits in Rome. Christina herself apparently inclined to the young Prince Leopold of Coburg.

But whomsoever Isabella married, the Montpensier alliance with her sister must be postponed until the birth of an heir. This Louis Philippe had, as we have seen, stated very clearly and explicitly to Lord Aberdeen.

During the Easter holidays of 1846 Lord Cowley had a distinguished English visitor at the Embassy. It was the former Foreign Minister, Lord Palmerston, accompanied by Lady Palmerston.

"The French Government," says Henry Bulwer, "being quite as anxious to be on good terms with one who was soon to be in office as he was desirous to be on good terms with the French Government, a series of parties were arranged by mutual friends, at which he met and conversed intimately with the leading men of the Chamber. At Madame de Lieven's there was a dinner at which he met M. Guizot, and at Lady Sandwich's a dinner at which he met M. Thiers and M. Roger du Nord; and, being presented to the King by Lord Cowley, he was naturally asked to dine at the Tuileries—the people crowded round the Minister whom they admired for not being afraid of them. His gay and easy manners were not the less appreciated by being seen in combination with the grace and charm of the lady he was accompanied by, and in two weeks rendered him the most popular man in Paris. When he met M. de Montalembert, who had just been making a violent attack upon him at Madame Delmar's, crossing the room he went up to him, and, holding out his hand, said, '*Je suis charmé de vous revoir*,' setting the hostess and her company, who had been fearing an awkward ***rencontre***, perfectly at their ease, Paris rang with praises of his good-breeding, and '*ce terrible Palmerston*' became '*ce cher Lord Palmerston*.' Before he retired to England, any idea of there being anything to apprehend from his reappointment as Foreign Secretary had disappeared on both sides of the Channel."

That Palmerston, set amidst a pleasant social environment, could be a most suave and agreeable personage there was no doubt. But his ideas concerning French policy really underwent no change—if anything they were confirmed by his visit. He could write :

" In proportion as people had persuaded themselves that the French liked us, and wished to be friends with us, in the same proportion are all men indignant at the undisguised hostility expressed by the French towards us, and at their systematic endeavour to undermine our interests in every quarter of the globe. We, the late Government, knew all this very well indeed since 1835, when France began to change her policy towards England, turned it from conciliation and friendship into enmity and aggression ; but in our time, excepting always the Syrian affair in 1840–41, this undisguised war was carried on by them out of the public view ; and the good people of England were induced to believe that the burst of enmity against us in 1840–41 was occasioned by some discourteous proceeding of ours about the treaty of July 1840. But now that the English people see that they have had for nearly three years a Government who have been constantly yielding on every point to France, and almost licking the dust before their French ally ; and now that in spite of all this France becomes every day more encroaching, more overbearing, more insulting, and more hostile, even the quietest and most peaceful among us are beginning to look forward to a war with France as an event which no prudence on our part can long prevent, and for which we ought to lose no time in making ourselves fully prepared. In such a war the Government would receive the unanimous support of the whole nation, and any new burdens that might become necessary for the purpose would be cheerfully borne."

Surely plain speaking could go no farther than this ? When at the end of June Lord Aberdeen resigned

with the Peel Ministry, Palmerston found himself once more at the Foreign Office.

During his absence from office he had not troubled to keep himself *au courant* with the Spanish marriage question. Now, on his return, he expressed no preference for any candidate. But he was very much concerned, indeed, at the political state of Spain.

"After a struggle of now thirty-four years' duration for constitutional freedom, Spain finds herself under a system of Government almost as arbitrary in practice, whatever it may be in theory, as any which has existed in any former period of her history." She was in 1846, in Palmerston's opinion, in the clutches of a "grinding tyranny"—that is to say, of M. Guizot's friends, the *Moderados*.

When a copy of this dispatch to Bulwer, who was then Minister at Madrid, reached the Tuileries, Lord Cowley reported to Palmerston that it gave the King much annoyance. But Louis Philippe was still more annoyed at the conduct of his own Ambassador in Madrid in assuring Queen Christina that, whichever Bourbon her daughter selected, the marriage of the Duc de Montpensier could be announced simultaneously with that of the Queen.

He declared that Count Bresson had gone too far, that England would never agree to it. Nevertheless, in three weeks he changed his mind.

On August 29, at midnight, the Queen at last made up her mind to marry Don Francisco de Asis, Duke of Cadiz.

"I learn also," wrote Bulwer, "that directly the Queen had signified her intention of marrying her cousin, Count Bresson formally asked the hand of the Infanta

for the Duke of Montpensier, stating that he had powers to enter upon and conclude that affair."

Here was a serious piece of business indeed.

Long prior to this, however, Palmerston had decided that Lord Cowley was growing too infirm to cope with the situation. The veteran himself recognized that a change was inevitable, and was not surprised to be informed that he might expect his successor in August. The Cowleys began no round of social farewells ; they proceeded to look for other quarters in Paris, and in that capital they remained until Lord Cowley's death in the following April.

Cowley had the satisfaction of knowing that his son and heir was rising rapidly in the diplomatic profession ; but he could hardly have foreseen in what a brief space of time this son would be occupying his father's and uncle's high post at the Embassy.

It is a curious fact, which may be mentioned here, how inter-related were the nineteenth-century Ambassadors and Foreign Secretaries. Partly is this owing to the Diplomatic Service being, perhaps happily, more or less a preserve for the aristocracy ; but that there should be three Wellesleys within forty years must be considered remarkable ; while an acting Ambassador, Henry Bulwer (Lord Dalling) married the first Lord Cowley's daughter, and his nephew, the second Lord Lytton, eventually became in turn Ambassador. Of Lady Feodorovna Wellesley, daughter of Earl Cowley, who was destined to be Ambassadress, we have yet to speak.

CHAPTER XI

ENTER THE NORMANBYS

"NORMANBY will be off to Paris to-morrow," wrote Lord Palmerston from the Foreign Office, August 17, 1846, to the retiring Ambassador in the Faubourg St. Honoré.[1]

Constantine Phipps, Marquess of Normanby, better known as the Earl of Mulgrave, had been a Colonial Governor and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. He had been tried in the Ministry, but had hardly proved a success. He prided himself, however, on knowing Paris intimately, and had, indeed, gained considerable reputation for his novels and sketches of French society.[2]

Thus we find Normanby as a young man writing :

"Now, France, I cannot help thinking a vain nation, as well as a proud one. Its public will not tolerate for an instant any of its caterers or writers to fly in its face. It must be flattered. All who approach, must approach with homage. The grave historian or philosopher must have a sentence or a paragraph in honour of the great nation. The essayist must wind up with a flourish of the kind, and the dramatist must have a similar clap-

[1] F.O. : Normanby to Palmerston (September 1, 1846).

[2] *France and the French ; Arabelle,* etc. In one of her letters Lady Granville had written in 1838 to her sister : "Normanby is loaded with all sorts of messages to you both. He has made himself extremely amiable here and I regret him very much."

trap. The critic who ventures to praise Shakespeare must take care to express a caveat in favour of Racine. . . . Our insular pride has nothing so illiberal as this." [1]

This eloquent perspicacity was well, but an even more powerful recommendation in Normanby's favour was that his wife was one of those Queen's Bedchamber women over whom there was a Royal squabble with Peel, and his brother, Colonel Charles Phipps, was Victoria's private secretary. This placed him in an advantageous position in respect to his sovereign—somewhat offset, it is true, by the hostile relations which subsisted between his immediate chief, Lord Palmerston, and the Queen. Normanby's six years' term at the Embassy was to prove one of the most stormy and dramatic in the records of the office. He had only been a fortnight in Paris when the French Foreign Minister, M. Guizot, officially confirmed the news of the double engagement of the Spanish Queen and her sister.

Palmerston was shocked at Louis Philippe's duplicity, and his resentment came to be shared by Queen Victoria and, indeed, the whole British nation.

"The settlement of the Queen of Spain's marriage," wrote the Queen to her uncle, "*coupled with Montpensier's*, is *infamous*, and we *must* remonstrate. Guizot has had the barefacedness to say to Lord Normanby that, though *originally* they said that Montpensier should *only* marry the Infanta *when* the Queen *was married* and *had children*, that Leopold's being named one of the candidates had changed all and that they must settle it now! This is *too* bad. . . . The King should know that *we* are extremely indignant, and that this conduct is *not* the way to keep up the *entente* which *he* wishes. It is done,

[1] *France and the French.* 1828.

moreover, in such a *dishonest* way. I must give Palmerston the credit to say that he takes it very quietly and will act very temperately about it." [1]

To Normanby, Palmerston wrote (September 27, 1846):

"We must try to prevent the marriage altogether, and, if it is delayed, we may be able to do so. They may offer to delay it till children are born on condition that we shall then help them to carry it through. This we could never engage for. We object to it entirely and at any time . . . ; when the Queen has children it would be a fair trial of strength between England and France. If done now, it would be a scandalous breach of promise and good faith on the part of the French Minister . . . Personally, I wrote to Jarnac, and told him and Dumont verbally that if this marriage takes place it will be the first time that the promises and declarations of a French King are not realized. I find I was too complimentary to the predecessors of Louis Philippe. Don't mention it to anyone; but the Queen is writing the King of the French a tickler in answer to a letter he sent her. Her letter was quite her own—in concert, I presume, with Prince Albert—and I did not see it until after it was written. She claims the performance of his *promise* to her to delay till after children are born to the Queen. In his letter to her he had dropped all mention of them, and alluded only to Guizot's promise to Aberdeen. She takes no notice of what passed between the Ministers, and dwells only on what was said between the sovereigns."

In a further letter to the Ambassador he thus expressed himself:

"The French lay stress upon my dispatch of July to Bulwer, and contend that they found, or thought they found, that we were thus giving encouragement to

[1] Victoria to Leopold (September 7, 1846).

Coburg ; and that this set them free from all their engagements as to not marrying Montpensier to the Infanta till the Queen should have borne children in the plural and not a child in the singular. But dates and facts cut the ground from under them ; for you see by Bulwer's dispatch that, some days before Bresson went to the Palace and carried by a night attack a double marriage, Bulwer had, with Bresson's knowledge, gone to the Palace and officially, on the part of the English Government, recommended not Coburg but Enrique ; therefore when Bresson demanded the Infanta for Montpensier he knew that there was no imminent danger of the Queen marrying Coburg.

"Our Queen and Prince Albert are perfectly right about the whole thing, and greatly disgusted with the bad faith of Louis Philippe and Guizot."

It has often been said that Palmerston and Guizot's rival, Thiers, were in close personal accord—nay, that secret communications passed between them. The diarist, Greville, accuses Palmerston of permitting Lord Normanby to supply Thiers with diplomatic documents bearing on the Spanish marriage question. Greville was a visitor to Paris at the time for the express purpose of attempting to restore the *Entente*, and was actually a guest of Normanby at the Embassy ; and it is possible and even probable, that Thiers' attacks on Guizot may have owed something to special information conveyed by Palmerston or his agents. Palmerston was never above working with any tools which would achieve his ends. But, as Sir John Hall points out, Thiers' great speech on the Spanish marriages, which so influenced French public opinion, is full of documentary evidence, and this documentary evidence was all contained in the British Blue Book which had already been published.[1]

[1] Hall : *England and the Orleans Monarchy.*

At first Palmerston was full of praise for the diplomacy of the new Ambassador. He wrote him (October 9, 1846):

"You have done capitally in all your communications with Guizot, and we are all much pleased with your manner of dealing with your business. Habits of debate are very useful to Ambassadors." He thought Guizot had cut a most pitiful figure in the whole transaction, "but I suppose that all he cares for is carrying his point, and that he is indifferent as to how he may stand in the argument. I should have thought, however, that he would have showed more regard to character.

"Lansdowne writes me word that when he read your dispatch giving an account of the quibble about the time when the marriages were to take place, the paper fell from his hand from astonishment at the contrast between that display of ingenuity and certain general professions of the value of truth and honesty which he had formerly heard from Guizot."

To understand the intensity of the feeling aroused one must remember that England's experience in the eighteenth century had shown her the danger of having to deal single-handed with two Bourbon Powers. She therefore had made it a cardinal point in her policy to check a recurrence of this danger. When the absolute rule of Ferdinand VII was restored by the French, Canning had responded by a celebrated counter-move. He had acknowledged the revolted Spanish colonies, "calling in the New World to redress the balance of the Old."

This time the British Ministry was helpless. Six weeks later, in spite of all remonstrances, the double marriage was solemnized in Madrid. Paris was naturally filled with glee at this checkmate to British policy.

Louis Philippe and his Minister, Guizot, had, largely through the adroitness and audacity of the French Ambassador in Madrid, M. Bresson, secured the object of years of scheming; but they had also administered a fatal stab to the Entente Cordiale.

The other European monarchs, feeling none too secure themselves in the rising tide of democracy, had their own reasons for wishing to propitiate rather than rebuke their French brother, the "Citizen King." They decided to hold aloof; only Metternich was heard to grumble that there would never have arisen any trouble at all if Don Carlos had from the first been permitted by England to succeed to the Spanish throne.

It may be mentioned here that years later Normanby came to doubt that the Spanish marriage had really been a settled plan of the King, but had rather brought to maturity a "half-formed intention forestalled by Guizot." He thought that Count Bresson, "finding an opportunity which might never recur of securing what he had been taught to consider a great national object, exceeded the instructions of the Minister, and committed his Government." Whatever the truth, that which he had done weighed heavily on the unhappy Bresson's mind. He was later transferred to Naples.

"I remember," wrote Normanby after Louis Philippe's fall, "the last night before he finally quitted Paris. We were both at the Théâtre Historique, and upon his coming into my box to take leave, I endeavoured to cheer his obvious despondency by saying that if one had to leave Paris one could not have a more acceptable residence than Naples. He replied, with evident disappointment, '*Pour moi, il me paraît que je ne fais que des gâchis partout où je vais!*' Three months after that he perished by his own hand in a fit of delirium."

M. GUIZOT AFFRONTED

Lord Normanby soon had not only a diplomatic but a personal quarrel with the French Foreign Minister on his hands; for the Ambassador reported the use of certain language which Guizot publicly denied. Palmerston wrote that

"John Russell and I agreed that some parts of your dispatch, written, as it was, under the natural excitement of the moment, were too pugnacious, and we thought these passages not essential to your complete vindication. The extract, as I give it, contains a plump *démenti* to Guizot, and my dispatch to you says that I believe you and not him. I am bound to say, however, that his insinuations are not regarded as being an imputation upon you. The part of his speech which has struck people here was his avowal that at the time of the marriage, because you were an adversary and in a matter in which he conceived the interests of the country concerned, he thought cheating fair."

Then came a strange lapse on the part of the Normanbys which set all Paris agog and very nearly brought about the Marquess's resignation. For, at the height of the feud Lady Normanby gave a ball, and a card was, as usual, sent to M. Guizot. This card, Lady Normanby afterwards announced, had "been sent by mistake." According to the Ambassador's version this statement was only made in reply to a boast of M. Guizot that Lord Normanby had been "ordered" from home to send the invitation as a proof that his Government did not back him up in the quarrel.

At all events, Guizot considered it an insult, and brought the matter up in the Chamber. Palmerston thought that both the Ambassador and his wife had behaved rather tactlessly.

"I should say," he wrote, "that as the invitation was sent, even by mistake, it would have been best to have assumed that it was sent according to rule, and thus to have left Guizot to go or not as he pleased. But he has dexterously taken an unfair advantage of your having said that the invitation was sent by mistake, and has thus contrived to make up a sort of party against you. . . . On any other occasion on which you give a party or ball you will invite the Ministers as usual just as if nothing had happened.

"To tell the truth, that has not been thought here to be quite as offensive as it seems to have been considered at Paris."

Nevertheless, the rumour ran that Normanby had resigned the Ambassadorship and had challenged Guizot to a duel!

Normanby at once sent out a *démenti* and Palmerston, highly displeased with the whole business, administered some further friendly counsel.

"My dear Normanby:

"I have received your dispatch brought by Rothschild's servant. I am glad you have written it because it may serve as an authority for contradicting the report if any occasion for doing so should occur, and it is useful that your statement should be placed before the Queen in case the assertion should have been made to her by her correspondents in the Tuileries. . . .

"As you say, these lies grow up like mushrooms at Paris, but they die away in the same rapid manner, and the lie of one week is obsolete and forgotten before the contradiction of the following week can overtake it. The only thing for you to do is to stand your ground and not to quit your post. If you were to go away on leave, Guizot would boast that he had driven you away, and even if your friends were to represent the matter differently, and to say that you had gone away as a

mark of the displeasure of yourself or your Government, Guizot would never do anything which could be deemed an apology; and then, if you went back again, your doing so would be a submission."

The incident was soon forgotten in the presence of graver events, just then occurring. Nevertheless, Bulwer afterwards wrote that, in his judgment, Lord Normanby had committed a "great and, I venture to say, vulgar error, quite unaccountable in a man of such breeding."

In Italy a new and Liberal Pope, in the person of Pius IX, had been elected, at a time when the political condition of the Papal States was as bad as could be. He determined to institute long-needed reforms which the reactionary policy of his predecessor had delayed. These concessions to revolutionary agitation were looked at askance by most of the other European Courts, but by none more so than by the "Citizen King," whose growing dread of innovation was unequalled by that of the Austrian Emperor himself. But in his policy of opposition Louis Philippe and his Minister, Guizot, had to be very careful not to arouse the democratic spirit of his own people. A secret agent was therefore sent to Vienna and a correspondence was begun with Prince Metternich.

In April the Pope's Nuncio in Paris had a long interview with Lord Normanby. He related to him his fear that His Holiness would meet with great difficulty in carrying out his proposed reforms. No help could be expected from the French, and it was therefore most necessary that the cause of Italian reform should receive "a more active moral support from England." He realized that there were constitutional objections to the establishment of direct diplomatic relations between

Protestant England and the Holy See, but he suggested that a special British Commission might be sent to Rome to inquire into the whole situation. Normanby duly reported this conversation to the British Government, who were favourably disposed towards the Pope's request. Palmerston thereupon proposed Lord Minto for a mission to Italy, but the Queen and Prince Albert objected that such a step, involving encouragement to the Italian Liberals, would be regarded as hostile by Austria as threatening her existence as an Italian Power.

But in this again Palmerston had his way, and Minto departed, his movements being watched with great disapproval by both Austria and France. He had been instructed first to visit Switzerland, which was also in a parlous state. Protestants and Catholics, Liberals and Clericals, were at daggers drawn, and the country seemed about to be plunged into a bloody war. The only chance of peace seemed to lie in the recall of the unruly Jesuits by the Pope. At first France had declined Austria's proposal to interfere, Louis Philippe not wishing to arouse any further British antagonism. But as the prospect of any immediate renewal of the Entente Cordiale remained remote, the King and his Ministers were now in a mood to co-operate with Metternich. But what form could co-operation safely take? They dare not employ French troops to fight the battles of the Jesuits.

On his arrival in Switzerland Minto took a hand by stating the views of the British Government as "the sincere and disinterested friend of Switzerland," and counselling moderation and a strict adherence to the Treaty of Vienna, in order to avert war between the cantons. But matters had already proceeded too far.

The Diet met and decreed the dissolution of the *Sonderbund*, as the alliance of the seven Catholic cantons was called, by the armed forces of the Republic.

France now wished to intervene in conjunction with the other Powers signatory to the Treaty of Vienna, and sounded the British Government on the subject. Palmerston's reply through Normanby was that England "could not go the length of thinking that the outbreak of civil war could release the Powers from those pledges into which they had entered to maintain the neutrality of Switzerland." Furthermore, she considered that the presence of the Jesuits in that country was at the bottom of the whole trouble, and they must be removed, whether by the Pope or the Swiss Diet. To secure this end England was ready to join in mediation, but the refusal of either side to accept mediation was not to furnish any excuse for armed interference in the internal affairs of Switzerland.[1]

These words had their effect; the Powers, although reluctantly, agreed, and the key of the situation was put in the hand of the British Foreign Minister. A joint note was signed in London, and was ready for transmission on November 26. But the Swiss had not waited for all these measures on their behalf; the Genevese General Dufour, with 100,000 men and 260 guns, set forth to carry the edict of the Diet into effect. On November 23 Dufour had fought his battles, gained a crushing victory over the seven cantons, the Jesuits had fled, and a few days later the *Sonderbund* was a thing of the past.

The moment the news reached Paris the charge was made that the whole of this violent suppression of the *Sonderbund* had been secretly fomented by England.

[1] F.O.: Palmerston to Normanby (November 16, 1847).

It was alleged then, and has been alleged since, by Sir Robert Morier, that the British Foreign Minister instigated Peel, the young secretary of the British Legation at Berne, " to perform his celebrated feat of precipitating the war of the *Sonderbund*." [1] The French Ambassador at Berne informed Guizot that, when Peel received news from London that the Powers contemplated mediation, he sent off at once a message urging General Dufour to march without delay upon Lucerne and attack the *Sonderbund* army.

However all this may be, the Swiss were now in no mood to listen to any talk of foreign mediation. They could not admit the claim of the Powers to interfere : the alliance of the seven cantons had been an act of simple rebellion which the Central Government had been strong enough to suppress.

Naturally this haughty answer of the Swiss Radical Executive was hailed by the Italian Nationalists, the German Liberals, and the French Reformers as a victory for the cause of political freedom and a Clerical defeat. It stimulated the Nationalists everywhere to action, and with the beginning of the new and fateful year 1848 the King of Naples and Sicily was forced to concede a Constitution. Metternich, watching the state of European unrest, wrote to an old friend, " You and I are not destined to end our days in peace."

The story of the French Revolution of 1848, the brusque abdication of the Citizen King and his undignified flight to England disguised as a comic bagman, is familiar to all readers of French history.

[1] *Memoirs and Letters of Sir Robert Morier.*

"These people," wrote Normanby of the French revolutionaries, "were convinced that their material interests had suffered owing to the rupture of the English alliance. The construction of railways in France had led, as in England, to a wild outburst of speculation. The undue inflation of prices was followed by the inevitable reaction. This unexpected depreciation in the value of the shares of the new companies was not, however, ascribed to its true causes. Disappointed speculators persuaded themselves that their losses were due to the disinclination of the British public to invest in French railways, owing to the change which the Spanish marriages had wrought in the political relations of the two countries."

The King of the French had

"brought upon his own family, upon France, and upon Europe a great calamity. A moderate and constitutional Government at home, coupled with abstinence from ambitious projects for his family abroad, might have laid the foundation of permanent peace, order, and freedom in Europe. Selfishness and cunning have destroyed that which honesty and wisdom might have maintained."

The abdication of the King left Normanby's functions in suspense, and they remained so until he was appointed Commissioner to the French National Assembly.

"I can," wrote Palmerston, "give you but provisional instructions. Continue at your post, keep up unofficial and useful communication with the men who from hour to hour may have the direction of events, but commit us to nothing."

On February 27, learning that Normanby was in actual difficulties for the want of ready cash, he scribbled a note :

"I send you a hundred sovereigns by this messenger, and will send you a hundred more by the next."

"It is so like 'Pam,'" Lady Normanby was said to have remarked, "to send a hundred sovereigns to this country which is making such a pother about sending *us one*!"

Normanby, therefore, remained on quietly at the Embassy, giving such protection as was possible to English residents, and being merely an observer of passing political events. He notes in his journal (February 24):

"Lady Normanby remains here, and keeps up her spirits very well; but there is no police at present, or troops, and many of the National Guards walk about with very suspicious-looking companions, so we have nothing to trust to but our strong gate and '*le droit de gens*.'"

The strangest story of all that Normanby had to tell was that of the flight of the young Duchesse de Montpensier, the unconscious instrument of Louis Philippe's dynastic schemes and of his downfall. When the Royal Family fled precipitately from the Tuileries, which was being invaded by a mob, the poor girl had apparently been forgotten. She was only sixteen. Hardly more than a year had passed since the ill-starred nuptials between her and the King's son had taken place; she was reported to be pregnant. Normanby was told that she had last been seen wandering about bewildered and wholly alone in the Tuileries crowd. The person who had recognized her had not dared to make a sign which might invite her destruction. No wonder the Ambassador

was shocked at hearing this tale, which appealed to him both as man and literary artist.

"Considering the pains that had been taken to make the château her home, the sacrifices by which this object had been attained, and the triumphant reception with which she had been so recently welcomed there, it does appear strange that no one should have been found to make it his duty to secure the retreat of one so young, so gentle, so helpless, and so beautiful, who therefore made even upon strangers such combined claims of chivalry as is left in the world. . . .

"At that very moment that interesting and illustrious child was wandering about utterly alone, every moment in danger of becoming the mark for popular fury, her only protection against insult being the apparent impossibility that one so cherished could be found in so piteous and deserted a plight." [1]

At seven o'clock the following morning two ladies came to the British Embassy. One of them had been officially attached to the Palace. They begged Lord Normanby's help to get the young Princess, who was now in their charge, out of the country to England! He instantly made the arrangements. Normanby had not been the man of letters, with a penchant for sentimental romance, which he was, had he not indulged in further reflections on the strangeness of the whole episode. What a contrast between the arrival of the Duchesse de Montpensier in the land of her adoption a year ago and the way in which she was now to quit it, perhaps for ever! All Europe had been summoned to the nuptials, and all had assisted save the representative of one country alone, which had held aloof,

[1] Normanby: *Journal of the Revolution of 1848.*

and yet *now* it was through the intervention of the Ambassador of that one country that she was about, under an assumed name, to reach British shores !

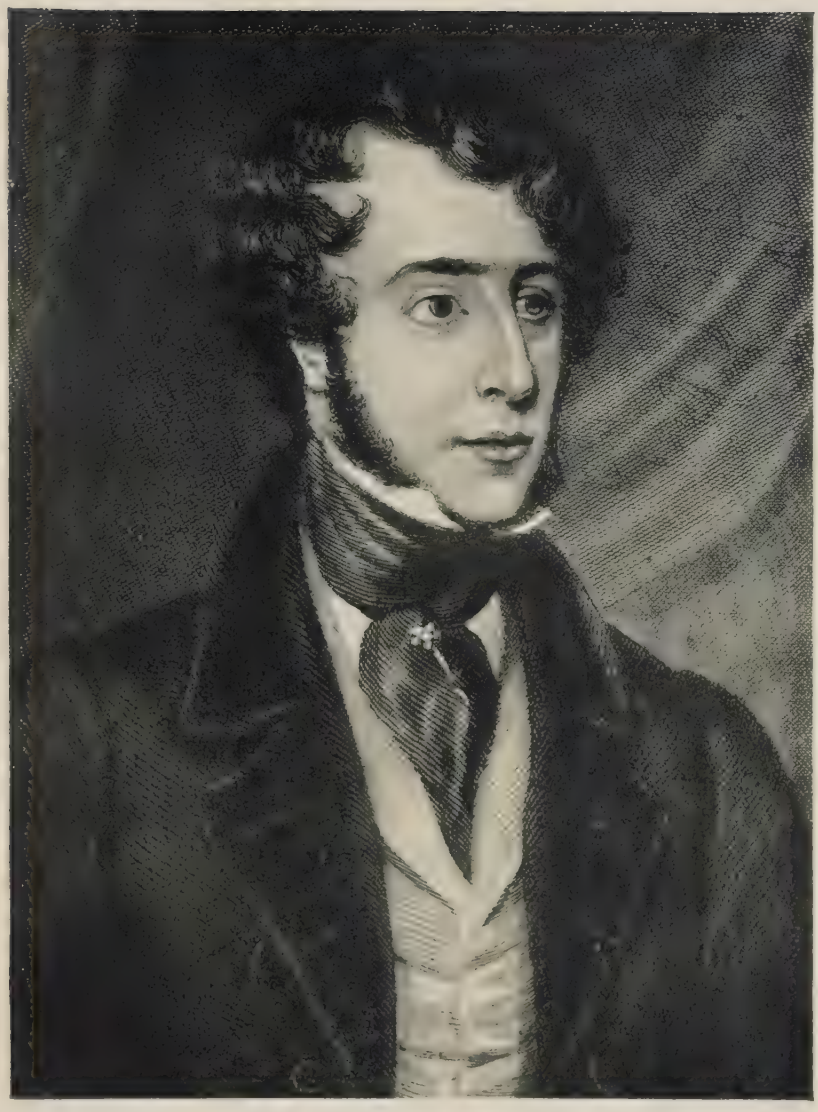
Unhappily, as it turned out, the British passport proved of little avail, and the little Princess underwent many painful adventures, especially with the rough folk at Abbeville, before she finally regained her husband and safety.

A few mornings later a lady, clad only in her dressing-gown and occupying a hotel close to the Embassy, rushed in and begged to see Lady Normanby. She had brought with her for safety all her jewels, and stated that she had just been awakened by her husband, who had been on duty with the National Guard all night, who told her that the mob was close at hand, and were at that moment endeavouring to burn down the Elysée Palace. If they succeeded, with the violent wind then blowing the adjoining houses were doomed. Normanby soon ascertained that the incendiaries had been checked in the nick of time by the National Guard. They were dispersed by the bayonet and the flames extinguished. Immediately afterwards "*Ambulance Nationale*" was chalked upon the façade of the Elysée for its future protection, and to save it from the fate which had already overtaken the Tuileries.

On April 15 Queen Victoria wrote to her uncle :

"I had a curious account of the opening of the Assemblée from Lady Normanby. No *real* enthusiasm, dreadful confusion, and the Blouses taking part in everything, and stopping the speakers if they did not please them. The opinion is that it cannot last."

On May 9 she wrote again :



THE MARQUESS OF NORMANBY.
Ambassador, 1846–1852.

To face p. 206.

"I enclose another letter from Lady Normanby, with an account of the poor Tuileries, which is very curious and sad; but the respect shown for poor Chartres is very touching. But why show such hatred to poor Nemours and to the Queen? Montpensier's marriage may cause *his* unpopularity."

Affairs in Paris still continued in confusion in spite of the eloquent appeal of Lamartine to his countrymen. Normanby notes in his journal:

"I see the English newspapers continue to make a great hero of Lamartine. I need not say it is from no want of personal partiality that I cannot quite share the feeling; I have been rather too much behind the scenes. He has excellent sentiments, but no steady principles; and no one can have so much vanity without, in his place, having some jealousy in his composition.

". . . The one distinguishing characteristic of Lamartine, which makes him valuable to us, is that he is the only one of these men who really likes England, although they are all of them rather afraid of quarrelling with us just at present."

On June 21 Victor Hugo, novelist, dramatist, and poet-peer, the uncompromising Citoyen Hugo, made a speech, his first as an elected representative in the Assembly. He seized the occasion, much to Normanby's disgust, to vilify England along with the rest:

"What adds to my inexpressible sadness is that other nations enjoy and profit by our calamities. While Paris suffers its present paroxysm, that our enemies take for the death agony, London is filled with joy. London makes merry. Yes, England, in this present hour, seats herself laughing on the brink of the abyss into which France has fallen!"

Another orator was M. Caussidière, who met England's strictly correct attitude by exhorting his fellows to annihilate English commerce. "*Il faut*," he exhorted, "*attaquer l'Angleterre dans son sein!*" [1]

At present Lord Normanby's position in Paris was complained of as equivocal. Why had months been allowed to pass and no steps been taken to accredit him to the newly proclaimed Republic? This the French considered a grievance, particularly as it prevented their having an Ambassador in London. Palmerston was prepared to meet their wishes, but when he proposed it to the Queen he found her opposed.

"As the proposed arrangement," she wrote, "for the present [August 8] is to be only a provisional one, the Queen thinks that the appointment of a *Minister* now will leave it quite open to have an Ambassador hereafter, if it should be found necessary or advantageous, whilst it would set that matter at rest for the moment. Withdrawing an Ambassador and substituting a Minister hereafter, would be much more difficult. The French Republic would no doubt like to have an Ambassador here, and perhaps take immediate steps to secure that object if Lord Normanby were accredited Ambassador at Paris, against which we would be secured in having only a Minister there. . . . Lord Normanby's acquaintance with the public men at Paris is as much an inconvenience as it may be a convenience in some respects; his having been the great admirer and friend of M. Lamartine, for instance, etc., etc. The possibility of mixing freely with persons of various kinds, which Lord

[1] The ingratitude of even nascent republics was soon forcibly to be shown. A few days after both these speeches the "workers of France," whose virtues both orators had extolled, sacked Hugo's house in the Place Royale, and M. Caussidière was fleeing for his life for refuge to a country which he would have attacked "in its bosom."

Palmerston adduces as an important consideration, will, in the Queen's opinion, be more easy for a Minister than for a person of the high rank of Ambassador. All things considered, therefore, the Queen will prefer to have temporarily a Minister accredited at Paris." [1]

The awkward part was that in the meantime Palmerston, without waiting for the Queen's opinion, had instructed Normanby to see the French Ministers and open up the subject with them. He did so, and they expressed their great satisfaction in the prospect of his continuing as Ambassador.

When Victoria heard of this she was very angry.

". . . By the delay and Lord Normanby's various conversations with M. Bastide and General Cavaignac," she wrote on August 11, "it has now become difficult to depart from the precedent of the Belgian and Sardinian missions without giving offence at Paris. The Queen must, however, insist upon this precedent being fully adhered to. She accordingly sanctions Lord Normanby's appointment as Ambassador Extraordinary, on the *distinct understanding* that there is to be no Ambassador sent in return to London now, and that a Minister is to be appointed to Paris when the diplomatic intercourse is permanently settled. The Queen wishes Lord Palmerston to bear this in mind, and to submit to her arrangement, which she thinks will be best calculated to carry this into effect."

Palmerston had gained his point, but at the cost of highly offending the Queen, who was also anything but satisfied with Normanby's share in the business. She had little confidence in the stability of the new French regime, and her opinion of Louis Napoleon both before

[1] In our own times, Paris has been given both a Minister Plenipotentiary *and* an Ambassador serving concurrently.

and after his election as President required time and more intimate knowledge to alter. To her Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, she uttered a bitter complaint (August 21) :

" The Queen is highly indignant at Lord Palmerston's behaviour now again with respect to Lord Normanby's appointment ; he knew perfectly well that Lord Normanby could not accept the post of Minister, and had written to the Queen before that such an offer could not be made, and has now made it after all, knowing that, by wasting time and getting the matter entangled at Paris, he would carry his point. If the French are so anxious to keep Lord Normanby as to make any sacrifice for that object, it ought to make us cautious, as it can only be on account of the ease with which they can make him serve their purposes. They, of course, like an *entente cordiale* with us at the expense of Austria . . . but this can be no consideration to *us*." [1]

For the ensuing three years Lord Normanby's relations with the Prince President and his Ministers were outwardly cordial, although the Ambassador profoundly distrusted Louis Napoleon's intentions. In London the Great Exhibition of 1851 gave the two countries an opportunity to exchange amiable sentiments of peace and good will.

All having worked well for the President's plans, on December 28 he seized the Government of France, arrested his chief opponents, put an end to the National Assembly and Council of State, and proclaimed Paris

[1] As far back as February, when Palmerston sent the Queen the draft of a dispatch to Normanby, she remarked that the expression " most cordial friendship " towards the French Government struck her as rather strong. " We have just had sad experience of *cordial* understandings. ' Friendly relations ' might do better."

in a state of siege. Next day Normanby's report of the *coup d'état* reached London.

Queen Victoria at once wrote to her uncle :

"I must write a line to ask what you say to the *wonderful* proceedings at Paris, which really seem like a *story* in a book or a play ! What is to be the result of it all ?

"I feel ashamed to have written *so positively* a few hours before that nothing would happen.

"We are anxiously waiting for to-day's news, though I should hope that the troops were to be depended upon and *order* for the present would prevail. I hope that none of the Orleans family will move a limb or say a word, but remain perfectly passive." [1]

As for the British Ambassador in Paris, his suspicions had proved well founded. Louis Napoleon's perfidy and high-handed action distressed him. The accompanying bloodshed only added to his distress. He thought England should openly deprecate such a crime as the *coup d'état.*

Before Normanby's letter could reach Palmerston the latter had seen the French Ambassador, Count Walewski,[2] to whom he light-heartedly and characteristically expressed his approval of Louis Napoleon's action. He felt no surprise, he wrote Normanby, that the President had struck the blow when he did,

[1] King Leopold's answer to his niece was that, although it was too soon to form an opinion, he was "inclined to think that Louis Bonaparte will succeed. The country is tired and wishes quiet ; and if they get it by this *coup d'état* they will have no objection, and let *le Gouvernement Parlementaire et Constitutionnel* go to sleep for a while."

[2] Charles Greville later described Walewski as "an adventurer, a needy speculator, without honour, conscience, or truth, and utterly unfit both as to character and capacity for high office of any kind." Which probably merely means that Greville disliked Walewski.

" for it is now well known here that the Duchess of Orleans was preparing to be called to Paris this week with her younger son to commence a new period of the Orleans dynasty."

Lord Normanby, having applied for instructions as to his future conduct, was desired to make no change in his relations with the French Government, and to abstain from even the appearance of interference in French internal affairs.[1] Having made a communication to this effect to M. Turgot, the latter replied that M. Walewski had notified to him that Lord Palmerston had already expressed to him his " entire approbation of the act of the President," and his " conviction that he could not have acted otherwise."

It was now Normanby's turn to write (December 6, 1851) :

" I this morning received Your Lordship's dispatch of yesterday's date, and I afterwards called on M. Turgot and informed him that I had received Her Majesty's commands to say that I need make no change in my relations with the French Government in consequence of what had passed. I added that if there had been some little delay in making this communication it arose from some material circumstances not connected with any doubt of the subject.

" Turgot said that delay was of less importance, as he had two days since heard from M. Walewski that Your Lordship had expressed to him your entire approbation of the act of the President, and your conviction that he could not have acted otherwise than he had done. I said I had no knowledge of any such communication and no instructions beyond our invariable rule to do nothing to *France* ; but that I had often had an

[1] F.O. : Palmerston to Normanby (December 5, 1851).

opportunity of showing, under varied circumstances, that whatever might be the Government here I attached the utmost importance to maintaining the most amicable relations between the two countries. I added that I was sure, had the Government known of the suppression of the insurrection of the Rouges at the time I had heard from them, I should have been able to add their congratulations to my own."

We know now that Palmerston really believed (as he admitted some years afterwards) that " if the President had not struck when he did he would himself have been knocked over." But he knew also that his public approbation of the act was most injudicious and even dangerous, in view of Normanby's attitude, which was entirely shared by the Queen. He was well aware that Her Majesty was being kept informed of the situation by Normanby, and regretted his own imprudence. It was therefore in a state of irritation that he wrote :

" My dear Normanby :

" In times of crisis and on affairs of deep importance frankness between persons officially acting together becomes a duty, and I feel compelled, therefore, to say that your dispatches create serious apprehensions in my mind. Events which are passing at Paris must have the most important influence upon the affairs of Europe generally, and upon the interests of this country in particular, and the character of our relations with the French Government may be much influenced by the line pursued through the present crisis by the British representative at Paris. The great probability seems still to be, as it has, I think, all along been, that in the conflict of opposing parties, Louis Napoleon would remain master of the field, and it would very much weaken our position at Paris and be detrimental to British interests if Louis Napoleon, when he had achieved a triumph, should have reason to think that through the

struggle the British representative took part with his opponents. Now we are entitled to judge of that matter only by your dispatches, and I am sure you will forgive me for making some observations on those which we have received. Your long dispatch of Monday appeared to be a funeral oration over the President, with a passage thrown in as to his intentions to strike a *coup d'état* on a favourable opportunity, as if it were meant to justify the doom which was about to be pronounced upon him by the Burgrave [1] majority.

" Your dispatches since the event of Tuesday have been all hostile to Louis Napoleon, with very little information as to events. One of them consisted chiefly of a dissertation about Kossuth which would have made a good article in *The Times* a fortnight ago ; and another dwells chiefly upon a looking-glass broken in a club-house and a piece of plaster brought down from a ceiling by musket shots during the street fights.

" Now, we know that the diplomatic agents of Austria and Russia called upon the President immediately after his measures of Tuesday morning, and have been profuse in their expressions of approval of his conduct. Of course what they admire and applaud is the shutting up of a parliament house by military force ; and probably when Louis Napoleon publishes his new Constitution with an elective popular assembly and Senate, etc., they may not think the conclusion is as good as the beginning ; but still think they are making great advances to him, and though we should not wish you to go out of your way to court him, nor to identify us with his measures, it would be very undesirable that he should have any grounds for supposing your sympathies identified with the schemes which were planned for his overthrow, and of the existence of which I apprehend no reasonable doubt can be entertained, though you have not particularly mentioned them of late."

[1] The " Burgraves " was a nickname for the Government party—Thiers, Tocqueville, Odillon Barrot, and others—in the Assembly. It was taken from the title of a play by Victor Hugo.

THE AMBASSADRESS TAKES A HAND

Palmerston's suspicions as to Lady Normanby's communications to her brother-in-law, Colonel Phipps, the Queen's secretary, were well founded. On December 7 she composed a long letter which she sent through private channels, being afraid to trust either the post or the King's Messenger :

" Palmerston," she wrote, " has taken lately to writing in the most extraordinary manner to Normanby. I think he wants to fix a quarrel with him, which you may be sure Normanby will avoid at present, as it would have the worst possible effect ; but I do not understand it at all, and I wish you could in any way explain what it means. Palmerston seems very angry because Normanby does not unqualifyingly approve of this step here and the results ; the whole thing is so completely a *coup d'état,* and all the proceedings are so contrary to and devoid of law and justice and security, that even the most violent Tory would be staggered by them. (For instance, to-day *all* the English papers, even Normanby's, are stopped and prohibited ; they will, of course, allow Normanby's to come, but it is to be under an envelope), and yet Palmerston, who quarrels with all Europe about a political adventurer like Kossuth, because he was defending the liberties and constitution of his country, now tries to quarrel with Normanby, and really writes in the most impertinent manner, because Normanby's dispatches are not sufficiently in praise of Louis Napoleon and his *coup d'état.* There must be some *dessous des cartes* that we are not aware of. Normanby has always said, having been undertaken, the only thing now is to hope and pray it may be successful ; but that is another thing to approving the way it was begun, or the way it has been carried out. The bloodshed has been dreadful and indiscriminate, no quarter was shown, and when an insurgent took refuge in a house, the soldiers killed everyone in the house, whether engaged in the *émeute* or not.

"It is very doubtful whether Normanby will be able to go on with Palmerston if this sort of thing continues, for he talks of 'I hear this' and 'I am told that,' with reference to Normanby's conduct here, which no man in his position can stand; as, if Palmerston takes the *on dits* of others, and not Normanby's own accounts, there is an end of confidence; but I say his last letter appears to me a sort of exuberance of anger, which spends itself on many subjects rather than the one which caused it, and therefore I suspect he has received some rap on the knuckles at home which he resents here, or on the first person who is not of the same opinion as himself; but it is a curious anomaly that he should quarrel with Normanby in support of arbitrary and absolute Government. All is quiet here now, and will, I hope, continue so till the elections, when I suppose we may have some more *émeutes*. . . .

"They have been told at the clubs that they may meet, but they are not to talk politics. In short, I do not suppose that despotism ever reached such a pitch. . . . You may suppose what the French feel; it serves them all quite right, but that does not prevent one's feeling indignant at it. And this is what Palmerston is now supporting without restriction. We are entirely without any other news from England from anyone. Would you not send me or Normanby a letter through Rothschild? I am rather anxious to know whether this is a general feeling in England; it could not be if they know all that had happened here. Mind, I can quite understand the policy of keeping well with Louis Napoleon, and Normanby does so, and has never expressed to anyone a hostile opinion, except in his dispatches and private letters to Palmerston. . . . I shall send this by a private hand—not to run the risk of its being read."

When the Queen first learnt to what lengths her Foreign Minister had gone she refused to credit it. Then she complained (December 13) to Lord John Russell:

QUEEN VICTORIA'S INDIGNATION

" The Queen sends the enclosed dispatch from Lord Normanby to Lord John Russell, from which it appears that the French Government *pretend to have received* the entire approval of the late *coup d'état* by the British Government, as conveyed by Lord Palmerston to Count Walewski. The Queen cannot believe in the truth of the assertion, as such an approval given by Lord Palmerston would have been in complete *contradiction* to the line of strict neutrality and passiveness which the Queen had expressed her desire to see followed with regard to the late convulsion at Paris, and which was approved by the Cabinet, as stated in Lord Russell's letter of the 6th inst. Does Lord John know anything about the alleged approval, which, if true, would *again* expose the honesty and dignity of the Queen's Government in the eyes of the world ? "

Palmerston tried to wriggle out of an awkward situation, but a further dispatch from Normanby made either a categorical denial or his own resignation necessary.

" In the dispatch of the 6th inst.," wrote the Ambassador (December 15), " notifying my communication of my instructions to M. Turgot, I reported that His Excellency had mentioned that M. Walewski had written a dispatch in which he stated that Your Lordship had expressed your complete approbation of the course taken by the President in the recent *coup d'état. I also reported* that I had conveyed to M. Turgot my belief *that there must be some mistake in this statement and my reason for that belief.*

" But as a week has now elapsed since any explanation from Your Lordship on this point, I must conclude M. Walewski's report to have been substantially correct.

" That being the case, I am perfectly aware that it is beyond the sphere of my present duties to make any remark upon the acts of your Lordship except inasmuch as they affect my own position. But within these limits

I must, with due deference, be permitted to observe that if Your Lordship as Foreign Minister holds one language on such a delicate point in Downing Street without giving me any intimation that you had done so—prescribing afterwards a different course to me, namely, the avoidance of any appearance of interference of any kind in the internal affairs of France—I am placed thereby in a very awkward position.

" . . . It must be obvious that by that act of Your Lordship's I become subject to misrepresentation and suspicion in merely doing my duty according to the official orders received through Your Lordship from Her Majesty.

" All this is more important to me, because, as I stated before, several of my diplomatic colleagues had had the dispatch read to them, and had derived from it the conviction that your expressions had been those of unqualified satisfaction."

Lord Palmerston (in a letter not shown to the Queen or the Cabinet) replied that he had said nothing inconsistent with his instructions to Lord Normanby, that the President's action was for the French nation to judge, but that in his view that action made for the maintenance of social order in France.

When, however, he expressed the same opinion to his chief, Lord John curtly wrote (December 19) that he " must ask Her Majesty to appoint a successor to you in the Foreign Office."

Naturally the Queen was immensely relieved. She wrote to King Leopold two days before Christmas, summarizing all that had occurred. Palmerston, she complained, has

" become of late really quite reckless, and in spite of the serious admonition and caution he received only

on the 29th of November, and again at the beginning of December, he *tells* Walewski that *he entirely* approves Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*, when he had written to Lord Normanby by my and the Cabinet's desire that he [Lord Normanby] was to continue his diplomatic intercourse with the French Government, but to remain perfectly passive and give *no* opinion. Walewski wrote Palmerston's opinion (entirely contrary to what the Government had ordered) to M. Turgot, and, when Normanby came with his instructions, Turgot told him what Palmerston had said. Upon this Lord John asked Palmerston to give an explanation, which, after the delay of a week, he answered in such an unsatisfactory way that Lord John wrote to him that *he could no longer remain Foreign Secretary* ; for that perpetual misunderstanding and breaches of decorum were taking place which endangered the country. Lord Palmerston answered instantly that he would give up the Seals the moment his successor was named. Certain as we all felt that he could not have continued long in his place, we were quite taken by surprise when we learnt of the *dénouement*."

The policy of his Government towards France, Lord John told the Queen,

" would continue to be of the most friendly character, and that there was nothing the Government more desired than to see a stable and settled Government in France ; that they had every wish for the stability of the present French Government. Count Walewski said he had received various assurances of opinion from Lord Palmerston, which he supposed were adopted by Lord John Russell, and subsisted in force.

" Lord John Russell said : ' Not exactly ; it is a principle of the English Government not to interfere in any way with the internal affairs of other countries ; whether France chooses to be a Republic or a Monarchy, provided it be not a Social Republic, we wish to express

no opinion ; we are what we call in England " a sheet of paper " in this respect ; all we desire is the happiness and welfare of France.' " [1]

Thus was brought about Palmerston's downfall for the present ; and, as may be imagined, that of Normanby was not long delayed. He had made for himself the reputation of being restless, capricious, and prejudiced, instead of the steady, sober personage that the international situation just then demanded. His friend, Lord Granville, son of the former Ambassador, who had momentarily stepped into Palmerston's shoes, felt obliged to rebuke him in a fashion which must have made the elder's pride wince.

" My dear Normanby " (he wrote, January 6, 1852) :

" Your letters are charming and most useful and instructive, but they are like letters which one might find in an old chest, narrating events which appear to be perfectly incompatible with the age in which we live. Still, I think our policy is to be well with the President, as long as he retains the immense power which he now wields, without committing ourselves to any approval of his late acts. . . .

" I am now going to make a most pert request for

[1] Lord John Russell to Queen Victoria (December 23, 1881). This friendly spirit might have been carried a good deal farther had it not been for Normanby's recalcitrancy and the Queen's outraged sense of propriety. She wrote to Lord John (December 1851) :

" The Queen sees in the papers that there is to be a *Te Deum* at Paris on the 2nd for the success of the *coup d'état*, and that the Corps Diplomatique is to be present. She hopes that Lord Normanby will be told not to attend. Besides the impropriety of his taking part in such a ceremony, his doing so would entirely destroy the position of Lord John Russell opposite Lord Palmerston, who might with justice say that he merely expressed his personal approval of the *coup d'état* before, but *since*, the Queen's Ambassador had been ordered publicly to thank God for its success."

one who writes such a hand as I do. Your handwriting is beautiful, but I, like Lord Palmerston, cannot read it. Perhaps you will sign the copies and keep the originals. Do not tell Lady Normanby, or she will never speak to me again for my impertinence."

Less than three weeks later the readers of the *Globe*, then the habitual recipient of Ministerial confidences, found a *communiqué* in its columns stating that the Ambassador had resigned.[1]

At the Embassy the Normanbys, while disgusted at the way they had been treated, recognized that they could not well have continued under the new regime in France.

Granville had thought of Lord Canning for the post, but the future Indian Viceroy and husband of Lord Stuart de Rothesay's daughter declined it. Lord Clarendon's name had been mentioned at Windsor Castle, and Prince Albert notes in a memorandum dated (December 23) a month before Normanby's recall :

" Lord John would like him as Ambassador at Paris, and thought Lord Clarendon would like this himself ; but it was difficult to know what to do with Lord Normanby."

However, Lord John Russell's Ministry itself was doomed. On February 5 Normanby was in his seat in the House prepared to launch an attack on Palmerston, if necessary, for the way he had been treated ; but Lord John sent him a message to say that the defence of the deposed Foreign Secretary " had been so flat that he thought it better I should not revive the subject in

[1] Malmesbury : *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister.*

the other House, as he said nothing about me which in the least required that I should do so."

"I yielded, of course, to such an appeal, though there are several points in his speech on which I could have exposed inaccuracies. The fact is, John has never shown any consideration for me in the whole of these affairs; but I do not mean in any way to complain.

"I am vexed," he continues to Colonel Phipps, the Queen's Private Secretary, "at not having been able to say anything publicly about all this, as I believe I could have dispelled many misrepresentations; but it cannot be helped. I have endeavoured throughout not to be selfish, and I may as well keep up that feeling to the last.

"I told John Russell last night I regretted that he had vouched for the intentions of Louis Napoleon. He said he had not done that, but owned that he *had* said more than he ought. 'The fact is, I did not know what to say next. I stopped, as one sometimes does—so I said that; I had better have said something else!'"

"Candid and characteristic!" is Normanby's comment.

In a few days Lord John Russell was beaten and resigned. The new Prime Minister, Lord Derby, offered the Foreign Office to Lord Clarendon and a new Ambassador entered on his duties in Paris.

CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT DUKE'S NEPHEW

THE choice of a new Ambassador to the French Republic, to the astonishment of everyone, fell upon the Duke of Wellington's nephew, and the son and heir of his brother, the late Ambassador, Lord Cowley. Little was known of this second Lord Cowley, save that he was a competent, painstaking diplomat then stationed at Hamburg, and possessing a fair share of the family ability.

It is odd that the Iron Duke should have died that year, and that another Wellesley should be installed in the Faubourg St. Honoré to deal—though with other weapons than the sword—with another ambitious Bonaparte—one, too, shortly to proclaim himself Napoleon and Emperor of the French. Lady Cowley was the daughter of Lord Henry Fitzgerald and Lady de Ros, whom he had married in 1833, and whose knowledge of the world of Society and of Courts was of great value to him in the new post, more especially as Cowley was extremely diffident in general society—a fact which "occasionally hampered his diplomacy." Of the Ambassador's family another popular member was the little Lady Feodorovna, his daughter, who twenty years later became the wife of Francis Bertie (the future Ambassador), thus forging another link in the chain which connects the Duke of Wellington with one of the latest Ambassadors. Of the staff at the Embassy one

may pause here to mention one who was destined in time to fill the chief post. This was young Robert Lytton, son of Lord Lytton and nephew of Lord Dalling, who had married the first Lord Cowley's daughter, and thus wrote in 1852 to his friend, John Forster :

" I think I see my way towards making much of my new appointment, but can't well judge yet. The work is not light. Chancellery hours from twelve to seven o'clock daily and night work once a week—that is for ciphering and deciphering cipher-dispatches, of which there are a great many. However, I have every wish and intention to work hard—the only way, I suspect, not to get ruined in this expensive and alluring place."

Yet already the future Ambassador was spending his spare hours in writing poetry, although he thought then—or said he thought—that " copying dispatches is a lesser labour."

Apropos of poetry, Lytton quoted in a letter a " poem " of Victor Hugo—now again on his travels.

" An Englishman (*loquitur*) !

Pour chasser le spleen
J'entrais dans un Inn
Où j'ai bu du gin,
God save the Queen ! "

For the first year diplomatic relations with the Republic and the Prince President could hardly be intimate.[1] Great caution and forbearance were necessary ;

[1] How unpopular the English were just after the *coup d'état* is thus referred to in a Memorandum by Prince Albert : " A Member of Parliament just returned from the Continent had told him that an Englishman could hardly show himself without becoming aware of the hatred they were held in ; the only chance one had to avoid being insulted was to say *Civis Romanus non sum*."

but by degrees the Queen's fears were removed. As her uncle, King Leopold, had written (December 19, 1851):

"When one sees the haste and ardour of earthly pursuits, and how all this is often disposed of, and when one sees that even the greatest success always ends with the grave, one is tempted to wonder that the human race should follow so restlessly bubbles often disappearing just when reached, and always being a source of never-ending anxiety. France gives, these sixty years, the proof of the truth of what I say, always believing itself at the highest point of perfection and changing it a few weeks afterwards.

"A military Government in France, if it really gets established, must become dangerous for Europe. I hope that at least at its beginning it will have enough to do in France, and that we may get time to prepare. England will do well not to fall asleep, but to keep up its old energy and courage."

Cowley soon gained the personal esteem of the Prince President, and faithfully reported his words and the demeanour and language of the Assembly, the Press, and the populace, and these reports were always read with deep interest by the Queen.

Thus, we find Victoria writing (October 26, 1852):

"My dearest Uncle:

"I must tell you an anecdote relating to Louis Napoleon's entry into Paris, which Lord Cowley wrote over, as going the round of Paris. It is, that under one of the triumphal arches a crown was suspended to a string (which is very often the case), over which was written, '*Il l'a bien mérité.*' Something damaged this crown, and they removed it—*leaving*, however, the *rope* and *superscription*, the effect of which must have been somewhat edifying!"

When, on the anniversary of the *coup d'état*, Louis Napoleon assumed the Imperial title, it became necessary for the Queen to issue to her Ambassador a fresh letter of credence, which evinces the flattering progress that both men had made in the Royal regard in a single twelvemonth :

" Sire—My Brother :

" Being desirous to maintain uninterrupted the union and good understanding which happily subsist between Great Britain and France, I have made choice of Lord Cowley, a peer of my United Kingdom, a member of my Privy Council, and Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, to reside at Your Imperial Majesty's Court in the character of my Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. The long experience which I have had of his talents and zeal for my service assures me that the choice which I have made of Lord Cowley will be perfectly agreeable to Your Imperial Majesty, and that he will prove himself worthy of this new mark of my confidence. I request that Your Imperial Majesty will give entire credence to all that Lord Cowley shall communicate to you on my part, more especially when he shall assure Your Imperial Majesty of my invariable attachment and esteem, and shall express those sentiments of sincere friendship and regard with which I am," etc.

In the course of the next two or three years the relations between France and England improved at a surprising rate.

The sentiments of Victoria towards Napoleon III and his bride Eugénie grew from respect to regard, and eventually into affection. Much of this was, of course, due to the joint action of France and Britain during the Crimean War of 1854–56.

It was during the progress of that conflict that

visits were exchanged between the two monarchs and their consorts. The Emperor, as Lord Cowley knew, could be very charming when he wished to be, and he certainly exerted his full charm upon Victoria, as her letters and journals at this period testify. A memorandum, written when the Emperor was under her roof, reveals her nascent understanding of her brother monarch's difficulties :

" He and the Empress are in a most isolated position, unable to trust the only relations who are near them in France, and surrounded by courtiers and servants, who from fear or interest do not tell them the truth. I would go still further, and think that it is in our power to *keep* him in the right course, and to protect him against the extreme flightiness, changeableness, and to a certain extent want of honesty, of his own servants and nation. . . .

" This is the course which we have hitherto pursued, and as he is France in his own sole person, it becomes of the utmost importance to encourage by every means in our power that very open intercourse which I must say has existed between him and Lord Cowley for the last year and a half, and now, since our personal acquaintance, between ourselves."

But it was when she went to Paris that her enthusiasm burst all bounds, and she told Lord Cowley that she had never enjoyed herself so much in her life.

To her uncle she wrote (August 29, 1855) on her return :

" Here we are again, after the *pleasantest* and most *interesting* and triumphant ten days that I think I ever passed. So complete a success, so very hearty and kind a reception with and from so *difficile* a people as the French, is indeed *most* gratifying and *most* promising

for the future. The Army were most friendly and amicable toward us also.

" In short, the *complete* Union of the two countries is stamped and sealed in the most satisfactory and solid manner, for it is not *only* a Union of the two Governments—the two Sovereigns—it is that of the *two Nations !* "

To Baron Stockmar she wrote in the same strain :

" We have come back with feelings of *real* affection for, and interest in, *France*—and indeed how could it be otherwise when one saw *how* much was done to *please* and delight us ? The Army, too (such a fine one !), I feel a real affection for, as the companions of my beloved troops ! "

As for the Emperor, she acknowledged his fascination, for

" . . . without *attempting* to do anything particular to *make* personal attraction in outward appearance, he *has* the power of *attaching* those to him who come near him and know him, which is *quite incredible.*"

When the Crimean War was over and Napoleon III had entered recklessly upon his grandiose European schemes, King Leopold agreed with his niece that it was certainly desirable to

" make every reasonable exertion to remain on personal good terms with the Emperor—which can be done. One party in England says it is with the French nation that you are to be on loving terms ; this *cannot* be, as the French dislike the English as a nation, though they may be kind to you also personally. The next is instead

of a good deal of unnecessary abuse, to have the Navy so organized that it can and must be superior to the French. All beyond these two points is sheer nonsense." [1]

As a contrast to the Queen's naïve opinion of Napoleon, there remains that of Lord Palmerston, written in 1860 :

" I have watched the French Emperor narrowly, and I have studied his character and conduct. You may rely upon it that at the bottom of his heart there rankles an inextinguishable desire to humble and punish England, and to avenge if he can the many humiliations, naval and military, which since the beginning of this century England has, by herself and by her Allies, inflicted upon France. He is sufficiently organized as to military means, but is now stealthily but steadily organizing the naval, and when he is ready the overture will be played, the curtain will draw up, and we shall have a very disagreeable melodrama."

With the part taken by Lord Cowley in all the negotiations and conferences that took place between 1858 and 1867 we can only deal summarily here.

He and Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Minister, had represented Great Britain at the Paris Congress which ended the war, and Cowley had the leading share in the subsequent negotiations regarding boundaries. It was he who signed the famous Declaration of Paris abolishing privateering.

Then came an event which nearly upset the *entente*. On January 20, 1858, occurred the fatal Orsini attempt to assassinate the Emperor ; the French public were filled with anger, because the plot had been hatched in

[1] Leopold to Victoria (July 16, 1858).

England, a country which, wrote M. Walewski in the course of a dispatch, " afforded deliberate countenance and shelter to men by whom assassination was elevated into a doctrine openly preached." Those sentiments were conveyed to the French Ambassador in London, M. Persigny, but the Ministry took no notice of it. When, however, the official *Moniteur* took to publishing addresses from French Army officers, calling for the invasion of England as " a nest of brigands and assassins," the British public was stirred to such a degree of anger against France and resentment against Palmerston for his *laissez-faire* policy, that the Government was defeated in Parliament. Matters might have gone much farther, but that Lord Cowley was instructed to obtain satisfaction from M. Walewski. Cowley went about it quietly, saw Walewski, and induced him to explain away the unfortunate phrases. Though he had not been charged to make any official communication to the French Government, he had " been enabled by Lord Clarendon's private instructions to place before the French Government the views of Her Majesty's Government far more fully, and I cannot but believe far more satisfactorily, than would have been the case had my language been clothed in official garb."

On the other hand, Cowley's confidential mission to Vienna to endeavour to avert war between France and Austria over Italy was foredoomed to failure, the war party in Paris being in the ascendant. After the bloody Battle of Solferino a truce was arranged, and Lord Cowley went as British representative to Villafranca. In a long dispatch he described the scene of the meeting between this pair of potentates, the like of which will surely never be repeated in European history. It also offers an excellent specimen of Cowley's style.

EARL COWLEY.
Ambassador, 1852–1866.

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" . . . The two Emperors met in the most cordial manner, shaking hands as if no difference had existed between them. As soon as they were alone, the Emperor of Austria took the initiative and stated at once that he was ready to cede to the Emperor of the French, for the sake of the restoration of peace, the territory which the latter had conquered, but that he could not do more, giving the reasons which I have mentioned to Your Lordship in former dispatches. The Emperor of the French replied that his own position in France, and the public declarations which he had made, rendered something in addition necessary : that the war had been undertaken for the freedom of Italy, and that he could not justify to France a peace which did not ensure this object. The Emperor Francis Joseph rejoined that he had no objection to offer to the Confederation which formed part of the Emperor Napoleon's programme, and that he was ready to enter it with Venetia; and when the Emperor Napoleon remarked that such a result would be a derision, if the whole power and influence of Austria were to be brought to bear upon the Confederation, the Emperor Francis Joseph exclaimed against any such interpretation being given to his words, his idea being that Venetia should be placed on the same footing in the Italian Confederation as Luxemburg holds in the Germanic Confederation. . . .

" In the course of conversation between the two Imperial Sovereigns, the Emperor of Austria remarked to the Emperor of the French with many expressions of good will, of a desire to see the dynasty of the latter firmly established on the throne of France, but that His Majesty took an odd way to accomplish his end. ' Believe me,' said the Emperor Francis Joseph, ' dynasties are not established by having recourse to such bad company as you have chosen ; revolutionists overturn but do not construct.' The Emperor Napoleon appears to have taken the remark in very good part, and even to have excused himself to a certain degree, observing that it was a further reason that the Emperor Francis

Joseph should aid him in putting an end to the war, and to the revolutionary spirit to which the war had given rise.

"The Emperors having separated in the same cordial manner in which they had met, the Emperor of the French himself drew up the preliminaries and sent them in the evening to Verona by his cousin, the Prince Napoleon. Being introduced to the Emperor of Austria, who received His Imperial Highness very courteously, His Majesty said, after reading the preliminaries, that he must beg the Prince to excuse him for a short time, as he had others to consult before signing them. He then went into an adjoining room, where, according to Prince Napoleon's account, a loud and angry discussion ensued, in which the Prince distinguished the Emperor's voice broken by tears, as if His Majesty had been obliged to have recourse to persuasion, to silence the opposition made to the conditions; and it was not until some time had elapsed that His Majesty returned and signed the paper containing them, or rather I infer that he retained the paper signed by the Emperor Napoleon, and returned one of similar purport signed by himself; for among all the curious circumstances connected with this transaction not the least curious is the fact that there does not exist any document recording the preliminaries with the double signature of both Emperors." [1]

As Lord John Russell wrote to the Queen after the signing of the Villafranca Treaty:

"The Emperor Napoleon is left, no doubt, in a position of great power. That position has been made for him by allowing him to be the only champion of the cause of the people of Italy.

"But that is no reason why we should seek a quarrel with France, and there is some reason to doubt whether the speeches made in the House of Lords, while they

[1] F.O.: Cowley to Palmerston.

display our weakness and our alarm, are really patriotic in their purpose and tendency.

"To be well armed, and to be just to all our neighbours, appears to Lord John Russell to be the most simple, the most safe, and the most honest policy." [1]

Nevertheless, suspicions concerning French policy in Italy continued to fill men's minds.

"Lord Cowley's letter," wrote Victoria to Lord John (January 21, 1860), "proves clearly that it is (as the Queen all along felt and often said) most dangerous for us to offer to bind ourselves to a common action with the Emperor with regard to Italy, whilst he has entered into a variety of engagements with the different parties engaged in the dispute, of which we know nothing, and has objects in view which we can only guess at and which have not the good of Italy in view, but his own aggrandizement to the serious detriment of Europe." [2]

A novel episode in the history of the Embassy occurred in 1859, when the great apostle of Free Trade, Richard Cobden, arrived in Paris. In the Parliament of that year John Bright had asked why, instead of lavishing millions on armaments to defend themselves against France, the Government did not go to the French Emperor and secure facilities for the free exchange of their goods for those of England. That, he declared, would be a far better guarantee for peace. When Bright made his speech, the idea of a commercial treaty was already in the air. It had been mentioned between

[1] "Let the Emperor appeal to the common sense of the English people by facts rather than by words," wrote Cowley to Russell (August 7, 1859), "and he would soon see common sense get the better of suspicion."

[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters* (July 13, 1859).

Lord John Russell and Count Persigny: there had been a good deal of vague talk and writing; it remained for Cobden to translate this into action. The time was happily chosen; Cobden went down to Hawarden and opened his mind to Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. Here, he explained, was the French Emperor disposed to a friendly gesture, which might well take an economic direction. What a chance for continuing the policy of tariff reform on the lines laid down by Peel! If Cobden had the authority of the British Government, he would visit Paris, explain the proposal for a treaty to the Emperor, gain support for it amongst the deputies by showing its mutual advantages, and eventually carry it through both Parliaments.

That there was a British Ambassador in Paris appointed for the express purpose of negotiating international arrangements made Cobden's proposition a delicate one. Gladstone consulted Lord John Russell, and found him and all his colleagues just then much too preoccupied "with the mighty question whether France is to take a bit of Morocco" to have time left for such a negligible subject as an extension of British trade!

"They were," says Morley, "really thinking all the time of strong dispatches and spirited representations." Palmerston had made the shocking discovery that "France aims through Spain at getting fortified ports on each side of the Gulf of Gibraltar."

"For my part," wrote Cobden, unable to conceal his impatience, "if France took the whole of Africa, I do not see what harm she would do us or anybody else, save herself." Palmerston distrusted the idea of Cobden's mission: but, as nothing was done to stop him, Cobden duly went to Paris.

When he arrived (October 18) Lord Cowley was at Chantilly. Intending to take no step without the Ambassador's knowledge, Cobden went to Chantilly, saw Cowley, and explained the great object he had in mind. Cowley was a broad-minded man, free from petty jealousy. Another in his place might have resented an informal commissioner's coming to the country to which he was accredited, with the avowed object of persuading its ruler to agree to an international treaty. As the Prince Napoleon told Cobden afterwards, "a man of first-rate capacity ought to have resented it, and either have given up his post altogether to you or to have resisted your encroachment on his functions."

But Cowley recognized Cobden's high and patriotic motives : he knew also that the great Free Trade apostle occupied a peculiar position in the country, had even refused a seat in the Cabinet. He therefore promised his help. He arranged a meeting at dinner with M. Rouher, then Minister of Commerce, and M. Chevalier, the French Free Trade leader. As the Englishman's movements were being closely watched, the utmost secrecy was practised—they might have been "three housebreakers under surveillance of the police." After this clandestine meeting came an interview with the Emperor at St. Cloud a few days later. Napoleon professed himself favourable to Cobden's project, but was afraid of his own protectionists.

Palmerston, sceptical of Louis Napoleon's pacific intentions, was doubtful if anything could come of a commercial treaty.

"Lord Cowley," wrote Cobden, "who knows the Emperor so well, smiled at the idea which so generally prevails of his being always actuated by some clever

Machiavellian scheme, when he is often only committing indiscretions from too much simplicity and want of statesman-like forethought. He repeated the opinion which he had expressed before, that '*it is not in him* to have any great plan for a political combination, extending into the future and embracing all Europe.' "

At this stage Persigny, the French Ambassador in London, came along to urge the Emperor to take some step to remove the profound mistrust which was agitating the British public. " So long as there was a solid friendship between England and France, they need not care what might be in the mind of Russia, Austria, or Prussia." This argument won over Napoleon to the treaty—" less because it was good for the French than because it would pacify the English." [1]

Other long interviews following, the negotiations reached the stage of formal diplomacy, and eventually Cobden received his formal commission from the British Government to act with Lord Cowley. Cobden came to the Embassy, where he worked himself nearly to death for weeks over the details of his treaty, which on January 23 was signed by Cowley and himself on behalf of England, and M. Baroche (acting Foreign Minister) and M. Rouher for France.

But though the diplomatic or political part of the task had been done, there was the more difficult commercial part, the schedule of tariffs, to be agreed upon. This proved a slow and wearisome business.

Months later Cobden had an interview with Prince Napoleon :

" He said he was about to mention a delicate matter, and suggested that I ought to be appointed Ambas-

[1] Morley : *Life of Richard Cobden*

sador to France ; that this would do more than anything to cement the good relations between the two countries. As this was said with a good deal of emphasis, and appeared to be the communication he had in view when he sent for me, I replied, with equal emphasis, 'Impossible! You really do not understand us in England!' I then explained exactly my position towards Lord Cowley ; that I had from the first been only an interloper on his domain ; that he had acted with great magnanimity in tolerating my intrusion ; that a man of narrow mind would have resented it, and that I felt much indebted to him for his tolerance of me. . . .

"I remarked that Lord Cowley had frankly owned that I had superior knowledge to himself on questions of a commercial or economic character, and that, considering how much they had been my study, it was not derogatory to him to grant me precedence in my own speciality."

On July 25 Cobden records :

"Called on Lord Cowley, and in the course of conversation expressed my disapproval of Lord Palmerston's project for fortifying the British coasts at the expense of ten to twelve millions sterling. I also censured the tone of his speech in alluding to France as the probable aggressor against England. The scheme and the speech were a mockery and an insult to me, whilst engaged in framing a Treaty of Commerce ; and I frankly avowed that, if I had not my heart in the business in which I was engaged here, I would return home and do the utmost in my power to destroy the Ministry. . . . He admitted that Palmerston's speech was injudicious in having alluded so exclusively to the danger to be apprehended from France."

At a critical period came a hitch in framing the tariff. There were certain scheduled items which made

Lord Cowley pause and request instructions from home before signing. But it was September and Government officials were away: the French Commissioners were ready to sign: Cobden got up and suggested that in the meanwhile the tariff might be published as a whole, leaving modifications to follow. Whereupon the British Ambassador, who was suffering from the strain put upon him for the past few months,

" jumped up from his chair and, seizing his hat, declared with considerable excitement that he would leave the room, throw up all responsibility, and leave the matter in my hands; that I had undertaken to act without his consent and in opposition to his instructions, etc. In vain M. Rouher explained that he had acted on my personal assurance, and that what I had said did not bind me as a plenipotentiary, and still less Lord Cowley. The whole scene ended in Lord Cowley refusing to sign the whole of the tariff on metals, and so we appended our signatures only to that portion which comes into operation on October 1."

It was the only time that any conflict had arisen between the two men. Previously Cobden had written to Bright: " Do not say a word to disparage Lord Cowley. He has acted a very manly part and has done his best to help me."

" Cowley," is Lord Morley's comment, " was probably only suffering from that jealous and surly spirit which the Foreign Office thinks business-like."

" You will not bless the day," wrote the Ambassador himself to Cobden in a friendly way, " when you made acquaintance with diplomacy. But, as you have now got entangled in our meshes, you must take us as we are, for better for worse."

After a struggle lasting twelve months Cobden brought off his treaty on November 16.[1]

"When I began last winter," he wrote to a friend, "as a volunteer in the corps of diplomacy, I little dreamed what a year's work I was preparing for myself. . . . I never had so tough a task in hand as that which I have just finished. Nor do I think I could again go through the ordeal."

Yet now that he had got his hand in, this amateur diplomat was not to be prevented from pressing two or three other measures conducive to easier relations between the two countries. The passport system was a fruitful cause of inconvenience and annoyance. He talked to the Emperor for an hour on the subject; the abolition of passports with regard to British subjects was ordained on December 6.

Cobden heard that the French Postmaster-General, responsive to the genial atmosphere created by the new treaty, was prepared to consider an increase in the weight of letters. "I am writing by this post to Rowland Hill to say that he has only to make the proposal. Thus in the same year we have the tariff, abolition of passports, and a postal facility."

No wonder Cobden could not forbear to ask: "Why should not our Foreign Office accomplish some good of this kind? I do not want to throw any blame on Lord Cowley, but can it be doubted that much more of the same kind might be done if there was a will?"

Doubtless will-power might achieve many instant results in the sphere of diplomacy: it is their permanence, alas, which is questionable.

[1] The treaty was unhappily short-lived; it was repealed in 1872.

About this time Cowley had good reason to appear "harassed and worried." The Savoy question had come to a crisis.[1]

One night there was a grand concert at the Tuileries, at which the chiefs of the foreign Diplomatic Corps were present. But let us relate the incident in Cowley's own words :

"On these occasions seats are assigned to the Ambassadors according to their accidental rank, and I was placed between Nuncio and the Russian Ambassador. It is customary for the Emperor, during the interval between the two parts of the concert, to say a few words to each of the Ambassadors individually, and it is obvious that what His Majesty says to one may easily be overheard by that one's immediate neighbours.

"Yesterday evening the Emperor, after saying a few words of no importance to the Nuncio, addressed himself to me in a manner and tone very unusual with him, animadverting upon the hostile sentiments evinced towards him in the English Parliament and Press. Wishing to avoid a discussion, I merely observed that I regretted that matters should be in such a state, but that His Majesty must be aware that there was quite as great irritation on this side the water. The Emperor inquired sharply whether this was to be wondered at, considering the terms and imputations applied to himself and to the French nation in England. They were only

[1] The correspondence was published in a parliamentary blue-book. Cobden remarks that both the Ambassador and the Secretary of the Embassy "complained of the practice of printing the dispatches giving an account of the conversations held with Foreign Ministers and other personages, remarking that reports of what passes at a gossiping interview may be very proper for the eye of a Secretary of State, but become very inconvenient when exposed to the eye of the whole world ; that their publication has the effect of making Ministers of State unwilling to hold oral communications with diplomatic agents."

defending themselves against unfair attacks, His Majesty said. It was really too bad, he continued ; he had done all in his power to maintain a good understanding with England, but the conduct of England rendered it impossible. What had England to do with Savoy ? And why was she not to be satisfied with the declaration that His Majesty had made to me, that he had no intention to annex Savoy to France without having previously obtained the consent of the Great Powers ?

" ' Pardon me, Sire,' I said, ' for interrupting Your Majesty, but it is just what you did not say. Had you permitted me to convey that assurance to Her Majesty's Government, I will answer for it that all those interpellations in Parliament would long since have ceased, and that Her Majesty's Government and the country would at all events have awaited the decision at which the Great Powers might have arrived.'

" ' But I told you,' continued the Emperor, ' that I would consult the Great Powers.'

" ' Yes, Sire,' I replied, ' but Your Majesty did not add that you would abide by their decision.' "

This conversation had taken place not only within the hearing of the Russian Ambassador, but the Emperor's remarks were addressed almost as much to Cowley's colleague as to himself. Turning then directly towards General Kisseleff, the Emperor continued :

" The conduct of England is inexplicable. I have done all in my power to keep on the best terms with her ; but I am at my wits' end (*je n'en puis plus*). ' What,' His Majesty exclaimed again, ' has England to do with Savoy ? What would have been the consequence if, when she took possession of the Island of Perim for the safety of her Eastern dominions, I had raised the same objections that she has now raised to the annexation of Savoy, which I want as much for the safety of France ? '

"His Majesty continued to speak for a few seconds in the same strain, and I felt my position to be most awkward. With the remembrance of His Majesty's intemperate words to M. de Hubner on New Year's Day, 1859, in my mind, I did not like to leave unnoticed observations of the tendency I have mentioned. At the same time I had to bear in mind that I was not present at an official occasion, but that I was the Emperor's guest, and that it would not be right to continue a discussion in the presence of others. These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind, and I determined to be guided by a night's reflection in taking any further step in this matter. What that reflection might have produced I cannot say, but circumstances led to more immediate explanations.

"As the Emperor moved on, the circle in which we were standing was not strictly kept, and after a few minutes I found myself standing a little in front, in the open space round which the circle was formed. The Emperor again accosted me, and was beginning in the same strain, when I ventured to interrupt His Majesty and to tell him that I considered myself justified in calling his attention to the unusual course he had adopted, in indulging, in presence of the Russian Ambassador, in his animadversions on the conduct of England."

What happened afterwards, Lord Cowley related in a private letter to Lord John Russell (March 7, 1860):

"My dear John:

"I send a messenger this evening in order that you may not hear from anyone else of the passage of arms which took place between the Emperor and myself yesterday evening. You will find the account of it in the enclosed dispatch. The more I reflect on it, the less I think that I could pass over the Emperor's conduct and language without notice. His tone and manner were really offensive, and if I had let them pass unheeded

might have been repeated on another occasion. I must say that nothing could have been more friendly than His Majesty's bearing after I had spoken to him. He was profuse in his excuses, and the Empress told me later in the evening that he was '*désolé—qu'il s'était laissé entraîner par un mouvement d'humeur*,' etc. I, of course, said that I should think no more about it.

"One good thing has been gained by it, that the Emperor has declared that he does not mean to act in defiance of the opinion of the Great Powers. . . .

"I wish that I had not this disagreeable history to trouble you with, but do not attach greater importance to it than it merits. I look upon it as at an end."

When the Foreign Minister forwarded Cowley's dispatch to the Queen he remarked :

"The strange scene related in it will remind Your Majesty of some scenes already famous in the history of Napoleon I and Napoleon III.

"Lord John Russell requests Your Majesty's permission to write a secret dispatch in answer, entirely approving the conduct and language of Lord Cowley." [1]

In 1863 Cowley unexpectedly inherited the estate of Lord Mornington, his cousin, at Draycott, near Chippenham, who, although childless, had left a sister. One day a long letter came from this sister inviting her cousin to come and stay with her at Draycott, while the next post brought a letter from a Chippenham solicitor informing the Ambassador that the entire estate had been left to him. Eventually, on his retirement, he made it his home.

After fifteen years at the Embassy, Cowley relinquished his post in 1867. On the very day that saw his departure there arrived a piece of news ominous for

[1] *Queen Victoria's Letters.*

the sovereign to whom he had been so long accredited. Maximilian, the luckless Austrian Archduke, Emperor of Mexico, and victim of Napoleon's grandiose schemes for French ascendancy in that tumultuous country, had been stood up against a wall and shot.

After that tragic event and the loss in Earl Cowley of an Englishman upon whose counsels and steadying influence he had so long relied, things went from bad to worse with Napoleon III and his Empire.

Of Cowley, Lord Malmesbury's testimony is worth giving.

"I never knew a man so naturally gifted for his profession. . . . Straightforward himself, he easily discovered guile in others who sought to deceive him, and this was well known to such."

CHAPTER XIII

UNDER LORD LYONS

"WHEN I first heard that you were likely to give up Paris, I felt alarmed at the prospect of the Embassy's falling into other hands. I should have been, indeed, alarmed had I then known into whose hands it was likely to fall. I received on the 3rd a letter from Lord Stanley offering it to me. I have accepted, in deference to my father's often repeated injunction never to refuse promotion, but I confess I am full of misgivings and anxieties." [1]

In such modest and engaging terms did Lord Cowley's successor, Lord Lyons, address him from Rome, where he had halted on the way from his late Embassy at Constantinople.

Richard Bickerton Pemell, second Baron Lyons, offered a striking difference in character, appearance, and habits from any of his six predecessors at the Embassy in the Faubourg St. Honoré. To find a parallel to him one must go back to the race of stout, sedentary, but mentally acute diplomatists of a long-previous day. He was fifty, the son of a peer and an admiral, had himself spent part of his boyhood in the Navy, graduated from Oxford, and entered the Diplomatic Service. He was a bachelor, very shy, and so entirely wrapped up in his diplomatic labours, to the exclusion of all other interests whatever, that it may be said to have formed

[1] Lord Lyons to Lord Cowley (May 8, 1867).

his whole life. And yet he was not a great diplomatist in the sense that Talleyrand and Metternich were great diplomatists. He was utterly destitute of guile, chicane, or the arts of flattery; he had no graces either of the rostrum or the drawing-room. "A big, simple schoolboy," said Madame Waddington: and yet a schoolboy with a brain so large that it could master and clarify any given international problem, and present it in a manner which evoked the unstinted admiration of each of the eight successive Foreign Secretaries under whom he served. As he himself wrote to Lord Granville:

"I have been for more than thirty years, and I still am, devoted to my own profession, and I am sure that if I can be of any use in my generation and do myself any credit, it must be as a diplomatist. I have worked my way up in the regular course of the profession, and have served under successive Governments, both before and since I became a peer, without any reference to home politics. In fact, I received my original appointment to the Service from Lord Palmerston; I was made paid attaché by Lord Aberdeen; I was sent to Rome by Lord Russell; to Washington by Lord Malmesbury; to Constantinople by Lord Russell; and finally to Paris by Lord Derby. The appointment was given to me in the ordinary way of advancement in my profession, and I was told afterwards by Lord Clarendon that my being wholly unconnected with any party at home had been considered to be a recommendation. I have myself always thought that a regular diplomatist could only impair his efficiency by taking part in home politics, and I have throughout acted upon this conviction."

Lyons' appearance in no wise suggested the diplomat of fiction. "He rather," says Lord Newton, who long served under him as attaché in Paris, "resembled the

conventional British squire, as depicted by Leech. The chief characteristic of his somewhat homely features was a small piercing eye which nothing seemed to escape, from the most important clerical error to a minute detail of a lady's dress."

He spoke and wrote with facility not only French, but Italian and German and even modern Greek, and was a most prodigious worker. He rose early and began the day by a careful perusal of all the leading French newspapers. Then came the reading and writing of dispatches and attending to official routine until lunch-time, after which he was at it again until nearly four, when he went to call on the French Foreign Minister or paid official visits. On his return to the Embassy he worked until dinner, and even afterwards, when telegrams arrived, he would be again at his desk until a late hour. Every letter which arrived received his personal attention.

Lord Lyons carried his caution so far as never to stir a yard outside the Embassy without a passport. He was once shown his *dossier* at the Prefecture of Police, which testified to his moral character. The entry, which he often gleefully quoted, was, "*Il ne lui connaît pas de vice.*" And, in truth, many excellent Frenchmen confessed to being able to make nothing of a man who had "never been in debt, never gambled, never quarrelled, and never been in love" in his life. Nor was this all. Lyons cared nothing for sport, had doubtless never played a game in his life, and detested exercise and outdoor diversions. During the later years of his embassy none of his staff ever knew him to walk farther than the English church in the Rue d'Aguesseau, which is less than a hundred yards from *le nid de Pauline*.

"There are only two things that disagree with me," he used to say, "abstinence and exercise." For, with

all his virtues, he was a decided *gourmand*, eating heavily of the richest dishes, washed down, to the amazement of French guests and Parisian hostesses, with cold water. Lyons was a total abstainer.

Well might the staff at the Embassy marvel that he kept his health.

In his character of British Ambassador, Lord Lyons was a firm believer in lavish ceremonial and imposing display. In spite of his shyness he never shirked his social duties, although he had no marked predilection for balls and theatricals. His entertainments were chiefly dinners, which were considered the most perfect in Paris—even to the wines. The Embassy stables never had more splendid horses, and *milord* Lyons' carriages were, even during the Empire, conspicuous for their magnificence.

Besides the regular staff at the Embassy, who often dined with their chief and to whom he showed a paternal kindness, Lyons largely relied upon two men, whom he had brought with him—Edward (afterwards Sir Edward) Malet and George Sheffield, who was his private secretary for over twenty years. Everybody in the political and social world in Paris came to know Sheffield, who, in turn, knew everybody. As the *fidus Achates* of the Ambassador, he was the repository of many secrets and was regarded as a model of discretion. One of Sheffield's peculiarities, we are told, was that, in spite of all his practice, he spoke French imperfectly, with an atrocious accent—a circumstance which never appeared to prejudice him in any way.[1]

[1] The very just remark is made by Lord Newton, who served several years at the Paris Embassy, that "the possession of what is called a good French accent is a much over-rated accomplishment in France itself. Frenchmen rarely wish to listen; they desire to talk

Francis Adams was later First Secretary and Counsellor at the Embassy, and during Lord Lyons' absence had the rank and title of Minister Plenipotentiary. "He was," writes Madame Waddington, "intelligent, a keen observer, had been all over the world, and his knowledge and appreciation of foreign countries and ways" was often very useful to the French Foreign Minister. Adams died suddenly in Switzerland, much to the sorrow of his chief and his many friends.

When Lord Lyons took up his duties in Paris in October 1867 the Third Empire was already, in the eyes of shrewd observers, notwithstanding its splendour and imposing ceremonial, tottering to its fall. The prestige of the Emperor had already declined to a low point throughout Europe, and the new British Ambassador was warned that if he wished to do business he must look less to the nominal head of the State than to his shrewd and ambitious consort, the Empress Eugénie, who more and more was assuming the direction of affairs, even of foreign policy.

"If Napoleon's career," says Lord Newton, "had ended in 1862, he would presumably have left a great name in history and a record of brilliant successes; after that period, however, everything seemed to go wrong for him. Poland, the Danish war, and the Austro-Prussian war had shown that his pretension to control the policy of Europe had practically vanished; the incomprehensible Mexican enterprise had ended in disaster and disgrace, and to add to these glaring failures in foreign policy there was a deep-seated discontent at home."

themselves and to be listened to; to them, as a rule, a foreigner is a foreigner and nothing more, and, whether he speaks French well or ill, they seldom notice and rarely care."

Just now he had got himself into fresh difficulties over what was called the Roman question, the result of Garibaldi's invasion of the Papal States, which were under the protection of France. French troops had cleared Garibaldi out of Rome at the cost of outraging the national sentiment of Italy, which demanded repossession of its old national capital. But if Napoleon recalled his troops the Pope would be at the mercy of the Italian Nationalists. He therefore proposed that this so-called Roman question should be discussed by a conference of the Powers at Paris.

In the Emperor's absence Lyons presented his letters of credence to the Empress Eugénie, who at that time appeared to many to be directing, or at least powerfully influencing, foreign policy in France.

"The Empress," wrote the Ambassador to Lord Stanley (November 11, 1867), "proceeded to speak of the Roman question, and insisted strongly on the necessity for a conference and on the importance and propriety of non-Catholic as well as Catholic Powers taking part in it. She expressed a very strong desire that England should not stand aloof.

"Without taking upon myself to anticipate your decision on the matter, I endeavoured to make the Empress aware of the very great difficulty and delicacy of a conference to us. Her Majesty said that, in her own opinion, the proper basis for the deliberations would be the maintenance of the *status quo*. This, she seemed to think, would be a fair compromise between the demand of the Pope that all the provinces he had lost should be restored to him and the pretensions of Italy to Rome itself.

"The conversation having been brought round to the measures to be taken immediately, I endeavoured to impress upon the Empress the advantage of withdrawing the troops without a day's unnecessary delay,

LORD LYONS.
(1867–1887.)
(From a photograph in the possession of Lady Philippa Stewart.)

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if not from the Roman territory altogether, at least from Rome itself. Her Majesty said that there was nothing in principle against withdrawing to Cività Vecchia at once, and that certainly the Emperor and she herself were anxious to bring all the troops back to France as soon as it was safe to do so.

"The Empress spoke discouragingly of the state of Italy—of the little progress that had been made towards uniting and assimilating the various sections of the population—of the financial difficulties and other unfavourable points. She said, however, that the unity of Italy had been the work of the Emperor, and that it would be absurd and disadvantageous to allow it to be destroyed. She believed that the French expedition had in reality been of as much or more service to King Victor Emmanuel than to the Pope. His Majesty's throne was threatened, she thought, by the revolutionary party quite as much as was the temporal power of the Pope.

"Among a great variety of topics which came up, the Empress spoke, by way of an illustration, of the Kingdom of Greece. She said it had been a mistake, if that Kingdom was to be created at all, not to give it a territory enough to enable it to exist. She did not, however, seem to think it would be advisable at this moment to make over Crete or any other Ottoman province to Greece. She appeared to be aware of the extreme peril to the whole Ottoman Empire of detaching any portion of it in this way.

"The Empress spoke with much grace both of manner and of expression, and I think with very great ability.

"For my own part, I endeavoured principally to make an impression on her mind respecting the immediate withdrawal of the troops to Cività Vecchia at least, and I am inclined to think that I succeeded so far as to ensure the repeating to the Emperor what I said on this point.

"I hear from all quarters that the Emperor's own position in France becomes more and more critical.

Everyone seems to admit that he could not do otherwise than send the expedition to Rome, but the success which attended it does not seem to have made much impression. All parties except the ultra-clerical appear to desire to get out of the intervention as soon as possible. So far as I can make out, the weakness of the Emperor's position lies simply in loss of prestige arising partly from his want of success on many recent occasions, and mainly, I imagine, from the inconstancy of men, and Frenchmen in particular. In fact he has reigned eighteen years, and they are getting tired of so much of the same thing and want novelty."

In reply, Lord Stanley observed that the Empress's "frank and sensible conversation" furnished the best reason he had received yet for keeping out of the affair altogether. What Her Majesty's proposed compromise amounted to was that the Pope should keep all that he had already, and merely renounce his claim to what, under no circumstances, he could ever hope to recover. The more he considered the proposed conference the more hopeless it appeared to him. There was no plan, nothing settled, no assurance that there was even a wish for agreement amongst the Powers interested. They were being asked to discuss a question on which they were certain to differ, and the sole reason given for summoning a conference was that the Emperor disliked bearing the responsibility which he had assumed. Why should we be asked to bear it for him ?

As both Bismarck in Prussia and Gortchakoff in Russia felt the same about the proposed conference, its chances were slight.

One of Lyons' earliest callers at the Embassy, whose visits became very frequent, was Prince Napoleon, who, in spite of his unpopularity, both with his Imperial

cousin and throughout the country, proved himself on many occasions to be a remarkably shrewd judge of current affairs.

"I have had a long interview with Prince Napoleon this afternoon. He does not desire that England should agree to the conference. He thinks that the best service England could render to the Emperor would be to advise him to give up the idea of a conference and settle the matter with Italy by satisfying, at least in a certain measure, Italian aspirations. He declares that Italy will never be quiet, and that the unity of Italy will never be assured until she gets Rome for her capital. He believes that the Emperor's support of the Pope is very unpopular with the great majority of the French people, and that it will, if persevered in, be a serious danger to the dynasty. He takes a gloomy view altogether of the state of feeling in France, and thinks that the Emperor will not be able to hold his own unless he abandons the system of personal government and gives a large increase of liberty. He wishes England to give this advice to the Emperor.

"He volunteered to say all this to me, and entered into a great many details. He spoke with great animation and remarkably well.

"My share of the conversation was but small. I think the advice which the Prince wishes us to give to the Emperor would be sound in itself, but that it would produce no good effect, unless His Majesty felt that he was in a strait, and asked our opinion. I am myself very little inclined to thrust advice upon him out of season." [1]

He told the Ambassador that in his opinion war with Germany was certain to occur in the spring. He considered that there were only two courses which could prudently have been taken—one was to have resisted the aggrandizement of Prussia immediately after

[1] F.O.: Lyons to Stanley (November 15, 1867).

Sadowa or to have applauded it. To have done neither was to have sown suspicion and animosity. The Prince denounced Thiers, who, in spite of all his peace talk, was always crying out that France was being wronged and humiliated, and so exasperating the public mind. The Emperor's only chance, even if successful in a war, was to establish liberal institutions in France and join with Italy against the Pope, neither of which he could bring himself to do. " He speaks very well and with a good deal of animation, and his opinions sound much better as he delivers them than they read as I write them." All the same, the Prince's forecasts were extraordinarily sound.

" The real danger to Europe," wrote Lyons, " appears to be in the difficulties of the Emperor Napoleon at home. The discontent is great, and the distress amongst the working classes severe. The great measure of the session, the new Conscription Act, is very unpopular. There is no glitter at home or abroad to divert public attention, and the French have been a good many years without the excitement of a change. I think that Europe, and England in particular, is more interested in maintaining the Emperor than in almost anything else." [1]

Lord Lyons' letters during this first year of office reveal his conviction, which was shared by other observers, that the Napoleonic regime was in a perilous state. The chief concern of the Emperor was to manage things in such a manner as to leave the Empire to his son, only making such concessions as were inevitable. But in his heart he saw that in a successful war lay his only chance.

[1] F.O.: Lyons to Stanley (January 16, 1868).

Prince Napoleon declared that he "fears weak men and he looks upon the Emperor as a weak man. He fears the people who surround His Majesty, the Generals, the Chamberlains, the ladies of the Palace."

In a letter written August 11, 1868, Lyons remarks:

"I hear the Emperor is very much out of spirits. It is asserted that he is weary of the whole thing, disappointed at the contrast between the brilliancy at the beginnings of his reign and the present gloom—and inclined, if it were possible, to retire into private life. . . . If he is really feeling unequal to governing with energy, the dynasty and the country are in great danger. Probably the wisest thing he could do would be to allow real parliamentary government to be established, so as to give the Opposition a hope of coming into office by less violent means than revolution."

Lyons found Napoleon a ready talker, disposed to divulge his projects, explain his principles, or narrate stories of his past with equal volubility. At first the Ambassador, although accustomed to American informality, was a little taken aback when, in a crowded ballroom, the Emperor seized his arm and began to expostulate upon how a recalcitrant Pope could be brought to terms. It was far more agreeable to spend an evening in the Emperor's private room at the Tuileries, and listen to the thrilling details of a plot just disclosed to him by the Tsar Alexandra of Russia for the simultaneous assassination of all the sovereigns and Royal Families of Europe.

"The Emperor Napoleon proceeded to tell me that it was asserted that the first and principal attempt was to be made in England; that the palaces and public buildings were to be blown up, and the Queen and

Royal Family seized and put on board a steamer in the Thames and 'disposed of.' The Emperor Napoleon went on to say that the supposed details of the scheme to overthrow the Government of England were, of course, absurd, but he seemed to intend to suggest that we should be vigilant, and that he himself would be glad to co-operate with us. He said that Mazzini, who had let him alone for some time, had now again taken up the idea of assassinating him, and was busily employed in making plans for effecting that purpose. He told me that Mazzini was very ill, and he did not express any wish for his recovery."

But the conversation assumed a lighter tone. "The Emperor," reported the Ambassador, "talked to me a long time, and related to me interesting anecdotes, some very amusing, of the conduct of various persons towards him in past times."

In July 1868 Queen Victoria, who was passing through Paris on her way to Switzerland, stayed at the Embassy. It had been arranged that the Empress, then at Fontainebleau, should come up to the Elysée Palace and call upon the Queen, which was accordingly done, and the visit to *le nid de Pauline* was most successful.

If only Pauline could have peered into some magic crystal and witnessed this august spectacle of two sovereigns, one the consort of her own nephew and the other the niece of the prince who had destroyed her brother, nodding and smiling over her little carved bed in her gilded bedchamber, how astonished she would have been! Another Royal memory had been added to a house which was full of curious associations.

But this visit had a sequel—a sequel which promised at one time to be serious. According to the common laws of etiquette it should have been returned. Victoria

should have stepped into one of those particular vehicles named in her honour, which stood awaiting her and her suite in the Embassy courtyard, and called upon her Imperial sister. Eugénie expected it, and sat waiting for hours at the Elysée. But the Queen did not come, and the next day the papers announced Her Majesty's departure from Paris.

How had such a *contretemps* happened? The explanation was really very simple: the Queen's Secretary, the Master of Ceremonies, the equerries, the ladies-in-waiting, the Ambassador himself, in fact all those who were entrusted with the arrangements, had never once thought of it! It seemed incredible, but such lapses do occur even in the most ceremonious and exalted circles. But the Paris Press immediately seized upon the incident, and "Another Insult to France" and "Grave Rebuff to the Empress" first informed Lord Lyons that a most regrettable omission had occurred and must somehow be repaired. The Orleanists alone were jubilant, pretending that what had happened was only further evidence that the ancient Royal houses no longer thought it worth while to treat the Emperor and Empress with the consideration which they would have shown to rulers of the older dynasty.

An explanation was at once put forth to the effect that the Empress herself had particularly asked the Queen not to take the trouble to return her visit. Yet, although the Empress accepted the Queen's explanation and apologies, the incident rankled, and the Emperor was deeply annoyed, chiefly at the attacks in the Press. The late Ambassador, Lord Cowley, who happened to be in Paris, paid a visit to Fontainebleau and reported that, in spite of what the Empress and her entourage had said, "she is sore at heart about the visit." Never-

theless the public, reported Lord Lyons on August 11, "appear to be rather accepting the version that it was in compliance with a request from the Empress that her Majesty, being ill and fatigued, abstained from returning the visit."

In October the Queen would be coming back. But it would be impossible, under the circumstances, for the Emperor to pay his respects as he had been anxious to do.

"It is not certain whether the Emperor and Empress will be at Biarritz or at St. Cloud at the time of Her Majesty's return. If they are at Biarritz there can be no question of any visit, and this might give an opportunity for a letter, which might smooth the difficulties on the point of etiquette. If the Emperor and Empress are at St. Cloud, it must be considered the same thing as if they were at Paris."[1]

A solution was eventually found in the Emperor and Empress arranging to go to Biarritz about the time that the Queen was to pass through Paris. But it was rather transparent and deceived nobody, although Victoria's cordial letter to Eugénie helped to smooth matters out.

It needed, however, something else to restore the injured relations, and this something else was the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales later in the year, which proved to be a triumphant success.

Not many months afterwards the Empress Eugénie, much to Lord Lyons' surprise, contemplated an extended tour through British Dominions in the East. She was about to attend the inauguration of the Suez Canal, and thought to combine it with a visit to India.

[1] Lyons to Clarendon.

EUGÉNIE'S PROPOSED VISIT TO INDIA

"The Empress talked to me last night," wrote the Ambassador, "for a very long time, and with great animation, not to say enthusiasm, of her project of going to India. She gives herself two months away from France, during which she proposes to go to Ceylon and most of the principal places in India except Calcutta. She repeated her thanks to the Queen and to you, and said that as the Queen had never been herself to India, she herself, as a foreign sovereign, could not think of receiving Royal honours, and besides, that she particularly wished for her own sake to observe the incognito and to be allowed to go about and see things in the quickest and most unostentatious manner. I told her that she had only to let us know exactly what her wishes were and every effort should be made to carry them out. She particularly begged that her idea of going to India might not be talked about, lest it should be discussed and criticized in the papers. I cannot suppose she will ever really go to India, but she is full of it now. La Valette will stop it if he can, for his own sake; for he depends a good deal upon her support at the Palace."

Lord Lyons was right. The Foreign Minister represented to the Empress that if she went to Suez she must certainly go to Constantinople; this was *de trop*, and the project was abandoned.

In the following spring an English newspaper announced that at a party given by the Princess Mathilde the Ambassador had been insulted by the Emperor. A recitation had been delivered, "marked by the most furious abuse of the English," and "the Emperor had gone up to the reciting lady and ostentatiously complimented her."

"The only foundation," Lord Lyons explained (May 9, 1869), "for the story you mention is the fact that I was at a party at the Princess Mathilde's at

which a play was acted and some verses recited. The room, however, was so small that only the Emperor and Empress and some of the principal ladies had seats in it. The rest of the company were dispersed in other rooms. For my own part, I was two rooms off, entirely out of sight and out of hearing of the performance and recitation. Among the verses was, I believe, an old ode of Victor Hugo's in praise of the First Emperor. I have never read it, but I dare say it is not over-complimentary to England. I hear the Emperor was affected to tears by it, but it certainly neither placed me in an awkward situation nor gave me any emotion, for it was out of sight and hearing, and I did not know it had been recited." [1]

Others, however, who were present, describe the incident as "most disconcerting," and state that the Ambassador, warned in time, sought at once the seclusion of the adjoining room.

Discreet Ambassadors—especially in Paris—must always close eyes and ears to such untoward things!

[1] F.O.: Lyons to Clarendon.

CHAPTER XIV

WAR AND THE SIEGE OF PARIS

AT the beginning of the fatal year 1870 the Emperor seemed to Lyons cheerful about his political prospects in France. A new Ministry came into power, and in May there was a plebiscite on constitutional changes which went heavily in the Government's favour. This Imperial success inspired the sycophantic Austrian Ambassador in Paris with the idea of a collective note of congratulation to Napoleon. The British Government instantly threw cold water upon the project when Lyons reported it.

"I think," wrote Lyons afterwards to Clarendon, "we are well out of the scrape of the collective congratulations. The notion was Metternich's, and the Nuncio only came into it to a certain degree, lest his refusing to do so should give offence. So far as I know the Nuncio has behaved very well, and has not brought *us* forward, but has simply told Metternich that he found the Diplomatic Corps generally cold on the subject, and therefore thought it better not to go on with it. Metternich appears to have acquiesced. I have not seen him; he was out when I called, which was, I think, lucky; and we have not met." [1]

But there was to be a ball at the Tuileries a few days later, at which, reported Lyons,

[1] F.O.: Lyons to Clarendon (May 19, 1870).

"I shall probably have a chance of saying something pleasant to Cæsar. I shall be careful to keep within the terms sanctioned by Mr. Gladstone. We may at any rate rejoice at the establishment of parliamentary government in France, and hope, till we have evidence to the contrary, that the means provided for upsetting it will not be resorted to. The present plebiscite was undoubtedly technically necessary to the legality of the new Constitution, and as such was insisted upon by Daru and other Liberals. Let us hope it will be the last."

The British Ambassador heard that there was to be a general illumination in the Emperor's honour on a certain evening.

"I must not leave the Embassy in darkness if everybody else illuminates, but I think the idea a foolish one, as being likely to give rise to street riots."

Lyons' fears were not realized just then. But when July came France and Prussia were facing one another armed to the teeth. On the 10th Lyons reported that he could not answer for the situation lasting for forty-eight hours.

"The French are getting more and more excited. They think they have got the start of Prussia this time in forwardness of preparation; that they have a better cause of war, as being one less likely to rouse the Germans, than they are likely to get again; and in fact that they must have it out with Prussia sooner or later; and that they had better not throw away this chance."

After the outbreak of hostilities he wrote sadly:

"It will be a miracle if we are as good friends with France six months after the beginning of this wretched

war as we are now, and it will require the utmost tact, prudence, and consideration for French susceptibilities to prevent all the improvement in feeling between the two nations, which has grown up in the last twenty years, being entirely destroyed."

The early reverses of the French were concealed from the public in Paris with some success, and MacMahon's defeat was known at the Embassy twelve hours before the official announcement. As soon as the truth came out, Paris went mad, imagining that the Germans would at once arrive at the gates.

"If," commented Lyons, "the panic in the Army is as great as it is in the capital, it is all over with France. One would think that the Prussians were already in Montmartre. There must, it is supposed, be a great battle fought before they can get there, and the French may win it.

"I have been beset with representatives of small Powers, all except the Belgian, in consternation, and with Rothschilds and other bankers in despair. They hope England will interfere to stop the Prussian Army on its road to Paris: not an easy task if the road is open."

All the Ambassador could hear at the Foreign Ministry was that the Emperor was concentrating forces between Metz and Châlons, and that a great battle was expected. Meanwhile the Prussian Minister in London was making complaints of French barbarities. A flag of truce having been fired upon, and field hospitals shot at, it was suggested that Lyons should make representations to the French Government.

"I hope," he replied in alarm, "this does not imply that you mean to adopt all Prussian complaints as

British, and make me the channel of communicating them to the French Government. Please do not forget that the United States Legation, not this Embassy, represents Prussian interests in France, and that if you impose upon me such works of supererogation as making unpleasant communications from Prussia, you will expose me to well-merited snubs, and damage my position so much that I shall be able to effect very little in a real emergency. The particular things which you mention ought not to be made the subject of diplomatic representation at all; they ought to be discussed by flag of truce between the two generals." [1]

At the close of August the Ambassador heard that the Crown Prince was advancing upon Paris. The Empress, the members of the Government, and the Chambers announced their determination to stay in town. The Empress feared that, if she once left, she might never return.

"I saw the Empress yesterday," wrote Lord Lyons on September 1, "for the first time since the war. She was calm and natural, well aware, I think, of the real state of things, but courageous, without boasting or affectation." Nevertheless, she soon had to make her escape. The Ambassador noted a great deal of depression in Paris. "People seem to feel that an obstinate defence of the town might only lead to its destruction and leave France more at the mercy of Prussia than ever. They have also a great dread that while the respectable citizens are on the ramparts the Reds may pillage the town."

At the request of the Provisional Government the British Ambassador undertook to sound Bismarck as to terms. He chose Edward Malet for the mission to

[1] F.O.: Lyons to Hammond (August 23, 1870).

the Prussian camp, and in his *Memoirs* the future Ambassador relates the joy he felt, after an exciting mission to the Prussian camp, at getting back under military escort to the Embassy.

"I saw the arms of my guard piled in the Court. My escort of *franc-tireurs* had arrived first, and was waiting to receive us—probably the first time that the military had ever been within the British Embassy.

"It was five o'clock on the 16th of September, and on looking round and seeing the quiet walls I had known so long, it was difficult to believe that eight hours before I had been in the midst of the German host. The garden sward was as green as ever, the flowers as bright, the fountain trickled as quietly; and I said to myself, 'Is this a nightmare, or have I indeed to-day seen abandoned towns, blown-up bridges, burning wrecks, the havoc and desolation of war?'

"I found Lord Lyons in the garden, and as we walked to and fro together on the lawn I made my report."

The next day at noon Malet was summoned across from the Chancery and found the Ambassador and M. Jules Favre in the yellow drawing-room.

"I was asked to sit down, and then Lord Lyons said to me, 'Will you repeat to M. Jules Favre the exact words which Count Bismarck said to you on parting?' I did so. Favre listened attentively, but said nothing. Lord Lyons gave me a kindly nod of dismissal, and I retired; but the message which I thus conveyed determined M. Jules Favre to go and see Count Bismarck."

The result was the celebrated interview at Ferrières, when peace could have been made on comparatively easy terms.[1]

[1] Sir E. Malet: *Shifting Scenes.*

Lyons had now in turn to make up his mind about remaining in Paris. There were some in England then and afterwards who thought he should have stuck to his post, but as the Empress (now Regent) and her Foreign Minister had gone, it is difficult to see what he could have done but follow them. The Ambassador and his staff quitted Paris for Tours by the last passenger train which left the city before its investment by the Germans. It was crammed with members of the Government and the Diplomatic Corps, and on arrival great difficulty was experienced in finding quarters of any kind, so crowded was the town. They finally rented a château in the neighbourhood.

One day not long after their arrival, Lyons and his staff going for a stroll about the ruins of Amboise Castle, their party of four were taken for spies and arrested. For nearly thirty years the secret of this incident was kept, as its disclosure at the time might have produced awkward consequences.

Malet declared afterwards he was obsessed by "visions of street boys bawling through London awful headings in the evening newspapers. . . . 'International outrage!' 'The British Ambassador arrested as a spy!' 'Marched through the town like a felon!' 'Meeting of the Cabinet!' 'Crisis imminent!'"

Release was eventually effected through the *maire*—Lord Lyons thus enjoining his staff: "Mind, not one word of this must pass your lips. It must never be spoken of by you. I give this as an order."

"I was a good deal put out," Lyons reported (September 9, 1870), "at having to leave Paris. The interest is still there; there was no danger in staying, and of course the diplomatists could have got the Prussians

to let them through the lines. But as soon as Jules Favre himself advised that I should go, I had nothing to say to my colleagues of the Great Powers, whom I had withstood, not without difficulty, for some time. At all events, I could not have stayed if they went, without exposing myself to all kinds of misrepresentation, and presenting myself to the public and Foreign Powers as the special partisan and adviser of the present French Government. The representatives of the small Powers, or most of them, want to be able to go home when they leave Paris, and are very much afraid of the expense and difficulty of finding lodgings here. Well they may be: I myself spent eight hours yesterday walking about or sitting on a trunk in the *porte-cochère* of the hotel, and have at last, in order not to pass the night *à la belle étoile*, had to come to a house out of town."

From Tours they went to Bordeaux.

"Lord Lyons," remarks Sir E. Malet, "had a strong objection to being bustled, and if ever a household was bustled we were on that occasion. Everything had to be packed in a few hours, and when at last all was ready he said placidly, 'This is my last move. If the Germans come to Bordeaux I shall get on board ship and go home.'"

Then followed the Siege of Paris, and for six months the Embassy was practically unoccupied, save by the porter.

When the siege began there was in the capital an adventurous M.P., an ex-diplomat and newspaper proprietor, who decided to remain, taking the place of Mrs. Crawford, the correspondent of the *Daily News*. His name was Henry Labouchère. He wrote Mrs. Crawford that the fancy had seized him because

"Sheffield of the British Embassy told me you had sent your little children to England. . . . I can always get as much fresh mutton as I want from the porter of the Embassy, who has orders to this effect. There is a flock of ewes and wethers in the grounds there. . . .

"The only person at the Embassy is the porter. We two will have more mutton than we can eat, even if the siege lasts long. The porter knows how to grow potatoes and mushrooms in an empty cellar, so that we two have not only meat but dainties, to vary the dishes. I have arranged to have rooms at the Grand Hôtel, so you see I shall be in clover."

On these terms the correspondent yielded up her post. But Labouchère's roseate dreams of luxury were not realized—perhaps the pleasant arrangement was upset by the Ambassador's orders. At all events, instead of roast mutton, potatoes, and mushrooms we find the enterprising Radical M.P. living (according to his own account) upon rats and mice and lesser delicacies before the terrible siege was over, and becoming reduced to skeleton proportions.

After six months' absence at Tours and Bordeaux, Lord Lyons and his staff returned on March 14, and were congratulating themselves on finding the Embassy uninjured. But four days later there came fighting and bloodshed, and the Commune was proclaimed at the Hôtel de Ville. The insurgents were completely masters of the right bank of the Seine, and on the following day an emissary from the French Foreign Office appeared at the Embassy to announce that the Government had been forced to retire to Versailles, and that, as it was no longer able to protect the diplomatic body at Paris, it was hoped that the representatives of Foreign Powers would follow immediately.

LIBRARY

THE EMBASSY BOMBARDED

Lyons waited three days, and then left, taking with him Wodehouse and Sheffield—leaving Malet, Colonel Claremont, Lascelles, and Saumarez at the Embassy.

At Versailles he found complete ignorance as to the actual situation; Jules Favre knew nothing, and the Government had either no plan or was not prepared to disclose it.

Paris was now delivered over to a bombardment which did infinitely more harm than anything the Germans had done. The Embassy suffered with the rest, but at first the staff who had been left there suffered little inconvenience; and the relations of Malet with the self-constituted officials of the Commune were quite friendly. Particularly was this so in the case of Paschal Grousset, the Délégué aux Affaires Etrangères (also described by his adversaries as *Etranger aux Affaires*), whose official labours were greatly facilitated by a brother who acted as his private secretary: "a very pleasant little fellow," records Malet, "willing to put his brother's signature to anything."

Later, Paschal Grousset had good reason to congratulate himself upon the pains which he had taken to ensure the safety of foreigners in Paris, and for the friendly disposition which he had shown towards them. When the Versailles troops obtained possession of the city, he was captured and would in all probability have been shot in company with other Communist leaders if representations in his favour had not been made by Lord Lyons.[1]

[1] He was transported; but subsequently returned to Paris under an amnesty, and years after was the cause of a comic incident at the house of a lady formerly connected with the British Embassy. This lady, hearing a terrific uproar in her ante-room, came out to see what was the matter, and found Paschal Grousset engaged in a

The closing days of the Commune, as seen by the occupants of the Embassy, were not without exciting passages.

First, on May 16 came the pulling down of the column in the Place Vendôme.

"It was announced," says Malet, "for two o'clock, but the old monument gave more trouble than was expected, and baffled its destroyers till six in the evening, when it finally fell, making all the square tremble as it reached the ground, where it lay prone, broken into three pieces."

Next day the cartridge factory at the Ecole Militaire blew up.

"As seen from the Embassy it was a strange sight—a vertical column of smoke shot suddenly up into the sky about two hundred feet, then came a deafening report reverberating through the air, and then a column of smoke spread at its top in every direction till the city grew dark beneath its canopy, and an incessant detonation of cartridges succeeded the first great roar. In this explosion six hundred people lost their lives."

One night Lord Lyons returned to Paris and wrote to the Foreign Office:

"The state of Paris is heart-breaking. The night I spent there was calculated to give one an idea of the infernal regions. Fires in all directions, the air oppressive with smoke and unpleasant odours, the incessant roar

violent altercation with her *maître d'hôtel*. It turned out that the latter, who was an ex-gendarme, had been in charge of Paschal Grousset when the latter was seized by the Versailles Government, and that he now strongly resented his former prisoner appearing in the character of an ordinary visitor.—Malet: *Shifting Scenes.*

of cannon and musketry and all kinds of strange sounds. For forty-eight hours before my arrival the members of the Embassy and all in the house were in imminent danger : a fire raging in the next street but one, shells falling on the roof which might set fire to the house at any moment, and shot flying so fast on both sides that escape in case of fire would have been hardly possible. It is a great satisfaction to me that everyone in the house behaved well. Of the members of the Embassy I was quite sure, and all the men-servants appeared to have shown pluck and alacrity in rushing to the places where the shells fell, in order to extinguish the fire in case of need. Malet has a first-rate head, and directed everything with his usual coolness and self-possession.

" One bit of a shell is said to have fallen in the garden yesterday morning, but it certainly did no mischief, and there was no appearance of danger while I was there. I cannot, however, feel quite comfortable so long as the insurgents hold the Buttes de Chaumont. They must, I should hope, be on the point of being driven out at the moment I write. Little or no intelligence of what was going on in the town could be obtained. The least inconvenience on leaving one's own house was to be seized upon to form a chain to hand buckets. Sentries stopped our progress in every direction ; arrests were frequent and summary executions the order of the day. I hope it will really all be over by to-night. Sad as it all is, I felt a satisfaction in finding myself in the old house again, and am impatient to return to it for good. I hope to do so directly I can without cutting myself off from uninterrupted communication with you."

Then followed the days of the National Assembly, the negotiation of a Treaty of Peace, the establishment of a Third Republic under Thiers and its early precarious history. All France's energies were bent on paying the indemnity and getting rid of the German Army of Occupation as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, there was

plenty of hard work for the British Ambassador, and for the staff only a dull and disillusioned Paris. What a contrast to the splendour and gaiety of the Empire were the first few years of the Third Republic!

But at the beginning of 1875, in the midst of Orleanist plots and Bonapartist intrigues, Paris took heart again. The Lord Mayor of London arrived to attend the opening of the new Opera House. No longer was their beautiful city spurned by the great ones of the earth. All Paris rose to welcome this magnificent personage.

When His Worship visited the Opera the ex-Imperial box was allotted for his use; the audience rose at his entry, and the orchestra played the British National Anthem. Twice he dined with the President of the Republic; the Prefect of the Seine gave a banquet in his honour, as did the authorities at Boulogne; and finally the Tribunal of Commerce struck a medal in commemoration of his visit.

"The Lord Mayor," wrote the unimpressionable Lord Lyons, "is astonishing the Parisians with his sword, mace, trumpeters, and State coaches. So far, however, I think the disposition here is to be pleased with it all, and I keep my countenance and do what I have to do with becoming gravity."

A little later, however, he was constrained to add:

"I am afraid the Lord Mayor's head has been turned by the fuss which was made with him here, for he seems to have made a very foolish speech on his return to England. Strange to say, the Parisians continued to be amused and pleased with his pomps and vanities to the end, although the narrow limits between the sublime and the ridiculous were always on the point of being overpassed. I abstained from going to the banquets

given to him or by him, except a private dinner at the Elysée ; but I had him to dinner here, and, I think, sent him away pleased with the Embassy, which it is always as well to do, and, if so, I have reaped the reward of my diplomatic command over my risible muscles."

Inasmuch as the honour paid was not to the individual but to the Chief Magistrate of the greatest and wealthiest city in the world, and was no more than would have been paid to a self-made president or the decadent ruler of a benighted community, Latin, Slav, or Asiatic, not more numerous, such an attitude of condescension, in a man of the sturdy common sense of Lord Lyons, provokes a passing reflection. To a country like France, where an ex-shoemaker may be the head of the State and receive the proudest sovereigns on equal terms, the spectacle of a wealthy and dignified English merchant —knighted into the bargain—being received as ceremoniously as if he were a high-born emissary of the Foreign Office, must lose something, if not all, of its absurdity.

But there soon came along a visitor of the true Royal blood : one, moreover, whose popularity with Parisians continued, with one or two regrettable eclipses, to the very end of his life.

In May 1878 Lyons was able to report :

" England is very popular here at this moment, and the Prince of Wales' visit has been a principal cause of this ; but the French have no intention to fight with us or for us. They back us up in asserting the sanctity of treaties, and they certainly desire that the *status quo* may be maintained in the Mediterranean until France is a little stronger."

Yet three months later he is found writing :

"It is no use to shut one's eyes to the fact that at this moment there is a great and general irritation in France against England. It is too soon to foresee what turn public opinion will take eventually, but at the present moment we must not forget to take this irritation into account in our dealings with this country."

The general feeling grew so unsatisfactory that he felt compelled to write to Mr. Knollys, the Prince's Secretary, urging that the Prince of Wales, who was acting as President of the British Section of the International Exposition, should postpone a contemplated visit to Paris, and enclosing articles in the Press of an abominable character directed against His Royal Highness. Irritation over the Anglo-Turkish Convention was not confined to one party, but existed in every class, from the *haute société* downwards. The Conservatives and their Press utilized it as a means of attacking the Republic. These complained of the effacement of France, and asserted that she had been duped by her former ally; while the Republican opposition, led by Gambetta, charged the Foreign Minister, M. Waddington, with having made a shameful surrender to England.

But politics—even Anglophobia—failed to ruin the Exposition. Naturally it threw upon the Embassy staff an immense amount of extra social labour. One of the most brilliant social functions of the year was a ball at the Embassy attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales, at which "the various hostile sections of the French political world met, on that occasion only, in temporary harmony."

The general success obtained by the Exposition, and the prominence of the English share in it, inspired Queen Victoria with a desire to come herself to Paris, with the Princess Beatrice and a small suite.

"So anxious was she to maintain secrecy that the only person in England to whom her intention was confided was Lord Beaconsfield, and Lord Lyons was enjoined not to say a word about it to anyone, but to inform her confidentially whether she could visit the Exhibition without being mobbed; whether the heat was likely to be intense; and whether there was any danger to be apprehended from Socialists—the term Socialist doubtless including, in the Royal vocabulary, Anarchists, Terrorists, and Revolutionaries in general. Incidentally, too, she expressed a wish to hear the Ambassador's opinion of the Treaty of Berlin." [1]

It was highly unlikely that Lord Lyons in his reply to his sovereign's letter would commit himself to an opinion on the policy of his official chief.

"Lord Lyons was always of opinion that Your Majesty's representative at the Congress should be a Cabinet Minister, and he rejoiced very much when he heard that Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury had been appointed. He has no detailed or authentic information of the proceedings of the Congress; but, so far as he can judge at present, he has every hope that the results will be satisfactory to Your Majesty."

Other letters followed, but after much hesitation the Queen finally abandoned her intention, saying that she had heard that the weather was intensely hot in Paris!

In the following year, however, the Queen came, staying for a couple of nights at the Embassy on her way south. On this visit Her Majesty sent for M. Waddington, who had never seen her since his undergraduate days at Cambridge. . . . She began the conversation in French (he was announced with all due ceremony as M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères), then, with a

[1] Newton: *Lord Lyons.*

smile, said, "I think I can speak English with a Cambridge scholar!" The Queen made Waddington talk of himself, and was astonished that he had chosen to make his life and career in France instead of accepting a handsome offer made by his cousin Waddington, then Dean of Durham. The Queen told Lord Lyons that it was very difficult for her to realize that she was speaking to a French Minister: everything about him was so absolutely English—figure, colouring, and speech.

When the interview was over Waddington found John Brown, the Queen's faithful Scottish retainer, waiting outside the door to greet the French Foreign Minister as half a Scotsman (Waddington's mother being a Chisholm). They shook hands, and Brown, with engaging self-assurance, gave the statesman a cordial invitation to pay a visit to Scotland.

Relations between the two countries did not improve, in spite of all Lyons' well-meant efforts. Perhaps he was not precisely the sort of ambassador for the Third Republic. He was shocked at their party violence, at their brusque manners, at their unconventionality.

"Gambetta," he wrote (June 3, 1881), "has astounded people by appointing a flashy newspaper writer, of no particular principles, to the post of Political Director in the Foreign Office. The Political Director is almost the most important person in the office, as he drafts all the political dispatches and notes. I hope the communications to the foreign ambassadors are not to be in the style of 'smart' newspaper articles. I confess that when I saw the appointment in the *Journal Officiel* it did not occur to me that the man could be the same Weiss who had been writing in the *Figaro*."

Yet M. Weiss was really a very able man and, although a journalist, understood foreign affairs very well.

" Generally speaking I am very unhappy about the growing ill-will between France and England which exists on both sides of the Channel. It is not that I suppose that France has any deliberate intention of going to war with us. But the two nations come into contact in every part of the world. In every part of it questions arise which, in the present state of feeling, excite mutual suspicion and irritation. Who can say when and where, in this state of things, some local events may not produce a serious quarrel, or some high-handed proceedings of hot-headed officials occasion an actual collision ? "

Then, in August 1885, came a prodigious outburst of Anglophobia in Paris. The irrepressible Henri Rochefort, in his newspaper, charged the British military authorities in the Sudan with downright assassination. A certain Olivier Pain, ex-Communist and French journalist, had accompanied the Turks in the campaign of 1877, and was occasionally employed by the Turkish Government as a secret agent. In the spring of 1884 he had set off to join the Mahdi. When he disappeared for some months, Rochefort boldly announced that Lord Wolseley had procured his death by offering a reward of fifty pounds for his head. The actual assassin was one Major Kitchener : [1] " *un sinistre grédin nourri de psaumes et abreuvé de whisky qui a eu le premier l'idée de mettre à prix la tête de celui qu'il appelait ' l'espion français.' "* Wolseley and the " *sinistre grédin* " being out of reach, Rochefort urged that vengeance should be taken upon " *l'Ambassadeur Lyons.*" " *A partir d'aujourd'hui il est notre ôtage ! Sa vieille peau est le gage de la satisfaction qui nous est due.*"

[1] Afterwards Lord Kitchener.

Just then, as it happened, the Ambassador was also far away on leave. But young Legh and others were there.

"It was, therefore, suggested that the few secretaries (of whom I was one) who were then in Paris should be forthwith strung up to the lamp-posts in the Rue du Faubourg St. Honoré. The astonishing thing was that these ravings were actually taken more or less seriously, and that for some time the French authorities found it necessary to protect the Embassy with numerous police detachments." [1]

Next year a new figure entered the Foreign Office as Lyons' official chief.

"My six months' experience," wrote Lord Rosebery to the Ambassador in Paris (August 10, 1886), "had led me to the conviction that our relations with France are really more troublesome than with any other Power. She is always wanting something of us which it is impossible to give her, and she then says plaintively, 'You never do anything for me.' She is quite oblivious of the fact that she never loses the opportunity of playing us a trick. Witness the secret expedition to the New Hebrides. Nothing would have induced me to go on with any one of the negotiations with Waddington until they had removed their troops from those islands. Whenever he asked for an answer about anything I always turned the conversation round to that interesting spot.

"With this conviction, therefore, it has been a great comfort to feel that you were at Paris."

The summer of 1886 marks the beginning of the famous *affaire* Boulanger. This personage was just then Minister of War.

[1] Newton: *Lord Lyons.*

"He was," wrote Lyons to Lord Rosebery, "supposed to be an Orleanist. Then he went round to Clemenceau and was put into Freycinet's Cabinet as a representative of the Clemenceau party, which, though not the most Red in the Chamber, is more Red than the Freycinet section. . . . He has also by degrees put creatures of his own into the great military commands."

In short, it was alleged that Boulanger was aiming at being a Cromwell or a Monk, and intended the overthrow of the Republic; but whether he favoured the Orleanists or the Bonapartists none as yet knew.

When M. Rouvier formed a Ministry in May 1887, he declined to take General Boulanger as a colleague. Instead of office he was given command of an army corps at Clermont-Ferrand. A "Boulangist movement" was started. He became a popular hero, and the people looked to him to give France her revenge for the disasters of 1870. The Bonapartists sided with him, and even the Comte de Paris encouraged his followers to support him, to the dismay of those Royalists who resented Boulanger's treatment of the Duc d'Aumale, whose name he had erased from the Army List when he was War Minister, as part of his Republican campaign against the Orleanist and Bonapartist princes. After various acts of insubordination, and twice coming to Paris without leave, Boulanger was deprived of his command.

His subsequent adventures and tragic end belong to Lord Lytton's period at the Embassy.

Boulangism and Anglophobia were at their height when Lord Salisbury wrote to Lyons (February 5, 1887):

"The French are inexplicable. One would have

thought that under existing circumstances it was not necessary to *make* enemies—that there were enough provided for France by nature just now. But she seems bent upon aggravating the patient beast of burden that lives here by every insult and worry her ingenuity can devise. In Newfoundland she has issued orders which, if faithfully executed, must bring the French and English fleets into collision. At the New Hebrides, in spite of repeated promises, she will not stir. In Egypt she baulks a philanthropic change out of pure 'cussedness.' In Morocco she is engaged in appropriating the territory by instalments, threatening to reach Tangier at no distant date. And now, just as we are entering on pacific negotiations, the French Government sent orders to do precisely that which, a month ago, Waddington promised they should not do—namely, run up the French flag at Dongola. It is very difficult to prevent oneself from wishing for another Franco-German war to put a stop to this incessant vexation."

Lyons was due to retire on superannuation in April 1887, but Lord Salisbury pressed him to stay on till the close of the year.

"The loss which the Diplomatic Service will suffer by your retirement will be profound, and for the time hardly possible to repair. Your presence at Paris gave to the public mind a sense of security which was the result of a long experience of your powers, and which no one else is in a position to inspire."

The strain, both mental and physical, was at last beginning to tell on Lyons' health. Besides the Jingo antics of General Boulanger, which were making the danger of war with Germany imminent, France's relations with England were not pleasant in that summer of 1887.

" Can you wonder," again wrote Salisbury (July 20), " that there is to my eyes a silver lining even to the great black cloud of a Franco-German war ? "

Soon afterwards the Ambassador went on leave to England. He never returned. Knowledge of his serious ill-health must have reached the Foreign Office, for towards the end of October he heard that his successor had been appointed to Paris, and there was accordingly no need for him to fulfil the promise he had given his official chief in Downing Street.

Lord Lyons formally resigned on November 1, and was created an Earl. On the 28th of the same month he was stricken with paralysis and lingered a week, never recovering consciousness.

There is pathos in the very last letter he penned, as illustrating, even in the shadow of death, that thoughtfulness and punctiliousness which had characterized him all his official life. It was a friendly note to Sir Edwin Egerton, the Chargé d'Affaires at Paris, reminding him of the payment of the fire insurance premium on the Embassy.

CHAPTER XV

LORD LYTTON'S AMBASSADORSHIP

IN late summer the gates of the Embassy had closed finally upon one who, for nearly twenty years, had come and gone daily upon the affairs of his sovereign and his country. By midwinter of that year, 1887, they opened to receive another British Ambassador, than whom a greater personal contrast to his predecessor can scarce be conceived.

It has been said of Robert, Earl of Lytton, that his career recalled that of an Elizabethan noble, "leading alternately the lives of a scholar, a diplomatist, a magistrate, a courtier, and a man of letters." Had he but been a soldier too, the parallel would have been perfect. "Few," added his friend, Dr. Garnett, "have touched life at so many points, have enjoyed such a variety of interesting experiences, or have so profoundly fascinated their intimates, whether relatives, friends, or official colleagues."

Born in 1831, the son of the famous author and statesman and nephew of Henry Bulwer (Lord Dalling), he had entered the Diplomatic Service at eighteen. We have already seen him an attaché at Paris: he had served at Madrid, Vienna, Athens, and Lisbon, and he had been Viceroy of India. He had written poetry—poetry of a glowing, romantic, unusual type—from an early age, and his novel in verse—*Lucile*—had made him one of the most popular poets of the day. Yet his prose,

although little known to the public at large, was equally attractive and skilful.

Lytton, wrote one of his Paris friends, "looked more the foreigner than the Englishman. But his dress was not French—it was original and peculiar to himself, as was all else about him. . . . But he was an Englishman to his heart's core, and nothing could exceed the love he bore to his own land." [1]

A student of international politics, Lytton was and always had been wholly out of sympathy with the general ideas and tendencies of French democracy. But Paris had, from his youth, strongly attracted him, and he had many friends amongst Frenchmen, particularly artists, writers, and thinkers.

Lytton was married to a charming and gifted woman, and from the moment of his arrival, a few days after Christmas, 1887, he set out to enjoy himself as no other Ambassador since Stuart de Rothesay, or perhaps Granville during his first term, had done—but in quite a different way. Yet at the start his experience was a little dampening.

"We found Paris bitterly cold, in a condition of *verglas* . . . the drive from the station to the Embassy seemed the longest and certainly the most perilous part of our journey. We were all the way an object of such increasing interest to the foot-passengers in the streets that I doubted whether we or our horses would reach the Faubourg St. Honoré without broken limbs. However, we got to the Embassy at last, safe and sound, and found ready for us there a most excellent dinner. . . . The cook promises to be a rare treasure."

Safe and sound, perhaps, for the new Ambassador

[1] *The Times*, November 28, 1891.

and his lady; but it was just then otherwise with their future home, the Embassy.

"The Government architect has discovered dry-rot in one of the floors, and has consequently taken possession of some of the best bedrooms, from which the ceilings are being removed and replaced. The house is surrounded by scaffolding, and filled with workmen, packing-cases, ladders, paint-pots, dust, and thorough drafts. The rooms destined for me, and the only ones in which I could work or receive with any privacy, were in the hands of the workmen."

Lytton underwent the usual ceremony of reception by President Carnot.

"My reception has been extraordinarily cordial, and within half an hour after it Carnot sent me twelve brace of pheasants, the trophies of his famous *chasse*, which, according to the French newspapers, has given him, strange to say, an unanticipated popularity. He is a very good-looking young man; I should say about thirty-three, though he told me he married in 1866 and has a grown-up son; black whiskers and moustache, straight neat figure, very pleasing manners, and intelligent face, though without much power in it. Altogether he looks rather like the serious *jeune premier* of a first-class French theatre.

"Flourens looks older, though I don't know that he really is so. I should give him nearly fifty; greyish hair, thin, a keen, thoughtful face, quiet, deliberate air, something academic about the cut of his jib."

M. Flourens, Minister for Foreign Affairs when Lord Lytton arrived in Paris, was succeeded in the spring of 1888 by M. Goblet, and he again shortly afterwards by M. Spuller. With all these, as well as with the Presi-

ROBERT, EARL LYTTON.
Ambassador, 1887–1891.
(From the portrait by G. F. Watts.)

To face p. 284.

dent, M. Carnot, Lytton worked on terms of cordiality and friendliness.

About the European situation he wrote on his arrival :

" Flourens speaks of it more cheerfully, and is evidently sanguine of peace. But I have not yet begun to talk politics here. To-morrow I begin a round of visits to my ambassadorial colleagues, and in the afternoon take Edith to call on Madame Carnot. When I shall be able to open, for official receptions, the doors of this ' disorderly house ' Heaven only knows ! "

It sounds like an echo of one of Lady Granville's letters sixty years before ! [1]

His arrival was hailed by his many old friends in Paris, and was soon a source of pleasure to many new ones. English society had never greatly charmed him. He disliked " the absence of any sort of *impromptu* element," and hated engagements which had to be booked for weeks or months beforehand. He preferred the greater ease and naturalness of French social life, and Paris itself he thought so beautiful " that " (he writes)

" I feel ashamed of not appreciating the privilege of being highly paid to live here in a luxurious house, with all that is requisite for the external comfort and enjoyableness of existence."

But his love of art and cultivation of letters in no way detracted from the exercise of his duties. He had an extraordinary facility and capacity for work, and a quick understanding of any given subject.

" The thoughtful, cultivated man and the attentive

[1] *Cf.* p. 69.

and laborious diplomatist," wrote a friend at his death, " were combined with the elegant, fashionable, artistic, and literary man ; and those who at night had seen him in a salon, amiable, eager, giving the signal for plaudits, always drawing and keeping people around him by his urbanity and grace, were surprised to find him next day in his study again a diplomatist, full of acuteness and perspicacity, calmly discussing the most delicate and complex international questions." [1]

His daughter, in her *Memoir* of her father, tells us that the Embassy became a meeting-place for all classes of society. Garden parties assumed real importance, and in these neutral grounds the most advanced Republicans elbowed the aristocratic world of the Faubourg without any friction or embarrassment.

" My life," he himself wrote to Mrs. Earle (January 23, 1888), " as yet is a rush for time from morning to night, and I can rarely get ten minutes to myself. The daily official work, though not at present heavy in itself, goes on at all hours, and involves a vast deal of talking as well as writing. What little intervals of seclusion I can snatch now and then are crammed with getting up the back correspondence on current questions, and wading through boxes full of tedious documents. I have at the same time to keep pace with the daily newspapers, French and English. Then the social duties have been, and continue to be, incessant, receiving and returning visits, granting business interviews, and answering dozens of daily notes in French from all sorts of persons about all sorts of things. I have not only to see a great number of persons, but also to find out all about each of them, and try to establish a certain *rapport* with them, without offending a host of other persons. Add to all this the domestic troubles of getting into working order a huge new establishment, in a foreign country, with workmen

[1] *The Times*, November 28, 1891.

still in the house, and all the servants cross and demoralized, and you may fancy the difficulties of private correspondence and the jaded feeling with which I turn to it. My health is not good just now, and I feel very depressed and weary, and all the long dinners through which I have to eat my way like a caterpillar don't improve the state of my peptics. My rooms are on the north side of the house, whence I never catch a sight of the sun ; but indeed there has been no sun to catch sight of anywhere. Both Carew and Lee,[1] however, are most helpful and thoughtful, and I am more than satisfied with each. All the staff of the Embassy is nice. Edith is a great social success, and does all she has to do in perfection. Con is much admired. All the world is very friendly to us, and our first reception seems to have gone off very well.

" . . . The French of all parties and classes continue to be overwhelmingly civil to us," he wrote to Lady Salisbury (February 14, 1888), " and I feel rather alarmed at the excess of their civilities.

" I went the other night with H.R.H. to see the new play of *Décoré* at the Variétés. It is delicious—a broad farce, but treated with such *finesse* that it almost attains the dignity of dry comedy. Its author, M. Meilhac, is a candidate for the Academy. . . .

" I have made the acquaintance of ever so many French poets and writers—Emile Augier, Coppée, Sully-Prudhomme, Halévy, Meilhac, Paul Bourget, and others. They have all sent me their works, and I have not a moment's time to read them. A literary young lady introduced by the Nuncio keeps writing to me that she is a child of genius, young, beautiful, and in need of guidance, and that the whole happiness of her future life depends on my granting her a private interview, which I continue to decline sternly."[2]

[1] Carew was private secretary to the Ambassador, but died that very year. Mr. (later Sir Henry Austin) Lee succeeded as the Ambassador's private secretary.

[2] This young lady was, I suspect, the famous Marie Bashkirtseff.

When Lady Lytton went on a short trip to England he gave a little *dîner de garçon*, which was

" an immense success, and has made quite a social sensation here. The guests were Flourens, Baron Alphonse de Rothschild, Ferdinand de Lesseps, Stuers (the Dutch Minister), Sardou, Coppée (the poet), General Meredith Read (an American member of *les Spartiates*), and my two secretaries. The new cook, who was on his mettle, surpassed himself. The conversation was brilliant, the lead being taken by Sardou, who is quite the most fascinating talker I ever met. It was well sustained by Coppée; I throwing in only a word now and then to keep it going, and Lesseps furnishing the texts. We discussed the Ancient Egyptians, the Phœnicians, Herodotus, Strabo, the Portuguese navigators, etc.—on all of which themes Sardou poured floods of erudition; but the stream of his talk was so sparkling, so rich in epigram, quaint illustration, and suggestive comment, that it was like nothing I ever heard before. X unconsciously contributed to the humour of the evening (it was his solitary contribution) in this wise: The talk turned at one moment on *Atlantis* and all the legends and traditions about it, in the midst of which my dear X solemnly turned to Coppée and said: 'I have heard of the book, but have not yet read it. Is it amusing?' Coppée solemnly replied, 'The original idea was not a bad one, but it *has been watered away so!*' Everyone was *en train*. Flourens went away delighted, and has beamed on me ever since, and all the other guests have spread it about that the only person in Paris who knows how to give a perfectly enjoyable dinner is the British Ambassador. But I shall never do it again. It was a lucky chance, and a single petticoat would have spoilt it all."

Lord and Lady Lytton went everywhere and into all circles in Paris, but they each had their own specia circle, and this was not quite understood or appreciated.

Sooner or later it was bound to cause difficulties. On one occasion Lady Lytton arranged a dramatic *soirée*, to which she invited about three hundred of her own Faubourg acquaintances. None of those connected with the existing political regime was invited.

A little later Lord Lytton gave a garden-party, at which his official, political, literary, and artistic friends assembled; but there were abstentions. A Cabinet Council having met and gravely discussed Lady Lytton's party, decided to keep away from her husband's.

It was a reminder, which still needs to be made, that France is a democratic Republic, and that the aristocratic and social status of Ambassadors and their wives at home has no impressiveness for the democratic society from which French statesmen are nowadays drawn, and that both Their Excellencies must be what the Americans happily call "mixers."

"Our Foreign Minister here,"[1] he writes about this time, "whom I should be very sorry to lose, has, I am afraid, been considerably damaged in public opinion by speeches, which I believe he never made (his wife says they were made for him by the newspapers), in the course of his recent candidature for Hautes Alpes. There is a very strong parliamentary combination determined to challenge his election, and it is quite on the cards that he will be unseated. Floquet is spoken of as the next Prime Minister. But a pure Floquet Cabinet could not last a month, and I think he will find it very difficult to form a mixed Ministry. He is a self-assertive sort of man and a vigorous President of the Chamber, with a comely, cleverish wife, who seems wound up to play her social part with perfect mechanical precision. . . . I am not yet so well acquainted as I could wish to be with the chief politicians here. But the opportunities

[1] M. Flourens.

of meeting them except on formal official occasions do not often occur. . . . The whole of French society seems to me to have settled down to a lower level and a lower tone since I was last here. . . ."

In another of his letters he says :

"I have been living the life of a hermit here, but, were I writing from Paris, I think I should be equally news-less. Nothing seems to be stirring there except the Boulanger affair, which is not particularly edifying.

"The man himself seems to be an egregious goose, and a mere tool in the hands of very second-rate political speculators, whom his former Republican friends are beginning to suspect of having been all along Bonapartist agents. Three weeks ago there was a real flutter of alarm about him at the Elysée. Now it is taken for granted that he is *coulé*. I expect to see him turn up again, however. Even a dead dog in a pond does that, and French democracy is a pond in which many nasty things are sure to turn up whenever it is stirred. For the present, however, the Boulanger agitation seems to be collapsing from want of funds. It has added a new word to the French language, and what a word! '*Le Boulangisme.*' If there is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous, that step is at least far-reaching; and between '*Le Césarisme*' and '*Le Boulangisme*' there has certainly been a vast descent of *everything* in this country from the formidably great to the contemptibly little. Yes, indeed, how significant is the contrast you point out between 'this picture and that' when one looks from Paris to Berlin! And to think how many heads have been chopped off, and what gutters have run blood, to produce a republic of whose history the two most characteristic events are the '*affaire Wilson*'[1] and the '*incident Boulanger.*' Meanwhile Floquet is putting great pressure upon the President to prevent

[1] M. Daniel Wilson, son-in-law of President Grévy, accused of trafficking in honours.

the infliction of any severe punishment on Boulanger, in whom he apparently foresees a useful ally at the next elections, if he himself should then be at the head of the Ministry ! "

And in another letter to Lady Salisbury he says :

" I am greatly touched, my dear *Chefesse*, by the very kind tone in which you ask about my health. My official duties at Paris have hitherto been very light, and the social ones, now subsiding, though a little troublesome at first, would, I feel sure, have seemed trifling to you, whose own are unceasing."

To Lord Salisbury, the Foreign Minister, he reports (March 30, 1888) :

" The Orleanists have issued instructions to their supporters to vote for Boulanger in the Nord on the 15th. The General himself, like a circus-rider, is simultaneously mounting more steeds than one. The towns are being told by his supporters that he is the only man capable of reconquering Alsace and Lorraine; whilst the rural populations, who are pacific, are being assured that the Germans so fear him that, by placing him in power, they will effectually prevent France from being attacked, and thus avert the danger of war. The German military attaché believes that up to the present moment Boulanger's bellicose sayings and doings have had no other definite object than the promotion of successful operations—*à la baisse*—by the financial speculators who have invested money in his career. . . . Flourens tells me that twelve months ago the French military attaché at St. Petersburg, on the eve of his return to his post, brought him a sealed letter which he had been charged by General Boulanger, then Minister of War, to deliver to the Emperor of Russia, and asked him whether he was to carry out the General's instruc-

tions. At the meeting of the Cabinet on the following day Boulanger, on being charged by Flourens with this irregularity, declared that the whole story must have been invented by the attaché, and positively denied the existence of the letter, which Flourens had all the time in his pocket ! "

In April a new French Cabinet was formed, with M. Floquet as Premier. M. Flourens was succeeded as Foreign Minister by M. Goblet.

" The most interesting thing I have yet seen in the French Chamber I saw the other day. It was Felix Pyat, the old Anarchist, seated up at the very top of the ' Mountain,' with a flowing white beard, the image of all that is venerable. In the course of the debate, however, he descended from his perch, mounted the tribune and, addressing the Chamber as *' Citoyens,'* delivered with great seriousness and vehemence a speech which was received with convulsions of laughter. France on her revolutionary course wears out her politicians as fast as an army in a forced march wears out its boots, and already this grim old creature is an anachronism."

" What curious people the French are ! " exclaims Lytton to his daughter (April 25, 1888). " They remind me more and more every day of the *Græculi* of the Roman period. One of the Boulanger *Réclames* which has lately been paraded all about the Boulevards is a huge crucifix with an image of Boulanger affixed to it ; Flourens and Tirard, in the character of Roman soldiers, poking spears into him ; France below as the *Mater dolorosa* weeping, and above the inscription, *' Il se relevera '* ! Flourens, who lunched here yesterday, told me that last year he had seen at Neuilly an exhibition representing the horrors of Hell—sinners pursued by demons with red-hot pincers, or roasted slowly on spits. The imaginary victims were not lay figures of waxworks, but men and women hired to perform the parts. Of one lady clad *en tricot,* and bound

to a spit which was being slowly turned before a tinsel fire, he inquired if it was very uncomfortable, and she replied, 'Not after one has got a little accustomed to the position.' [1]

"My official duties have not lately been very interesting, the chief subjects of them being sugar and bottled wines, but then neither have they been at all heavy."

"I think you will have been amused," he writes to Mr. Justice Stephen (July 17, 1888), "by the reports of the Boulanger duel, which came off just after my return to Paris. I don't think it yet possible to guess what will be the practical effect of it on the political prospects of the *Brav' Général*. The next election will show. But one would suppose that to be worsted in sword-fence by a Pékin,[2] and stuck in the throat like a pig by a fat civilian, would not redound to the credit of a military hero, and that the *vox populi* would say to him, 'You silly man, you don't even understand your own silly trade.' French sentiment, however, is incalculable. . . . The Parisian populace seem to care nothing about this or any other political event. Nothing struck me more on the 14th of July than the extreme apathy of the crowd, and the total absence of anything like enthusiasm for or against any political personage."

Boulanger, with his majority of over 80,000, had now "nearly obtained all the weird sisters promised him. 'Thane he is, and shall be king hereafter.'"

"Floquet's confident calculations have been tremendously refuted. . . . At a Cabinet Council last

[1] This rather recalls the oft-quoted tale of the Princess Pauline, who, clad not even *en tricot*, and sitting for her portrait or statue, was asked if she did not find the process rather embarrassing. "Oh no," she replied, "the room was quite warm."

[2] I.e. a civilian, with whom Boulanger fought a duel.

night at the Elysée, when the result of the election was known, Floquet, it is said, tendered his resignation. Carnot refused to receive it ; and the Government stays in till it is turned out by the Chamber. . . . The character of the next Ministry depends upon Carnot. But Carnot himself depends upon circumstances, the turn of which I cannot attempt to forecast. . . . Carnot, however, seems born to make a virtue of necessity on all critical occasions. He said last night to his Ministers, 'After all, the election has not gone against the Republic, since General Boulanger calls himself a Republican, and it is in that capacity he has appealed to the Paris constituencies.' . . . Randolph Churchill, on his way through Paris, saw and catechized Boulanger. He repudiated aggressive designs, but said he should certainly take a higher tone in foreign affairs ; that France with her present army was in a position to hold up her head and make herself respected ; and that it was time to put an end to the *coups de pied* she is now receiving from her neighbours. With regard to ourselves, he said, 'I am not anti-English, but if I were to tell you that I regarded the interests of England and France as identical I should not be *un homme sérieux*.' "

The French Government, within two months of General Boulanger's election for Paris, had instituted a prosecution against him, and were prepared to sign a warrant for his arrest, when the General himself fled to Brussels, and by so doing extinguished the hopes of his party and his own fame and popularity.

Lytton thus reported to Lord Salisbury (April 3, 1889) :

" This morning I telegraphed to you the substance of a manifesto published in the Paris journals, and purporting to have been issued from Brussels by General Boulanger. The document turns out to be quite authentic. . . . General Boulanger has been for months past under

the constant surveillance of the police, but most of the agents employed for this purpose by the Government are secretly in sympathy with his cause ; and, whether from one of the Ministers or by what other means I cannot say, it is certain he has hitherto received accurate intelligence of what goes on in the Cabinet within an hour or two after each of its meetings. Last Monday evening he received through these channels positive information that the warrant had been signed and delivered for his arrest at noon the following day (Tuesday). Had this warrant been executed the Government would have met the Chamber at two o'clock the same day with a demand for a bill of indemnity—on the ground that it had acted in the interests of the public safety upon information that the General was about to escape from France, and with proof in its possession of his complicity in crimes against the State. That the Bill would at once have been passed by the Radical majority and the opportunists in the Chamber there can be no doubt. In that case the Government would have brought him for trial before the Senate. His condemnation by the Senate was a foregone conclusion, and it was to have been followed by his transportation to New Caledonia, where he would have been effectually out of the way.

" Boulanger's own impression seems to have been that the Government would not venture to carry out such a programme, and that it had furnished his informants with false intelligence in the hope of frightening him out of the country, and thus relieving itself of a great embarrassment. But his friends were unanimous in the opinion that the risk of acting on that impression would be too great ; and, in accordance with their urgent advice, he took the train to Brussels that night."

General Boulanger went from Brussels to London. In his absence he was tried and condemned for treason. Later he retired to Jersey, and ceased to cut any figure in the political world. On September 30, 1891, the

world was startled by the news that he had committed suicide in a cemetery at Brussels by blowing his brains out on the grave of his mistress. What would have happened to Anglo-French relations if he had achieved supreme power can only be imagined.

In July, Lytton was once more at his post, and writes from Paris :

"Not for many years have I felt so well as I am feeling now, and never before have I found Paris so enjoyable. I am still correcting the proofs of *King Poppy*."

A tree is still shown in the Embassy garden beneath which the Ambassador habitually wrote.

The great exhibition to commemorate the centenary of the Republic was held in Paris this year. At the time of the opening Lytton was in England, but during the ensuing summer he frequently visited the exhibition.

There is a malicious passage in one of his letters relating to *la grande Sarah* :

"Apropos of farces, Sarah Bernhardt—intoxicated with the new idea of virginity ever since she acted Jeanne d'Arc—has been reciting a French passion play in the biggest circus of Paris, with a Christ in white tie and tail-coat. The audience got bored, rose in revolt, screaming out, '*Tu nous ennuies : assez de Christ. De la musique ! de la musique !*' So that quite unintentionally and unconsciously the *chef d'orchestre* played in this performance the part of Barabbas ('Not this man, but the other !'). Then the author of the play, white with rage and *très ému*, began skipping over the benches on to the stage, shaking his fist at the audience, and, with copious tears, kissing first Sarah Bernhardt, then his mother, then his sister, and then his mistress. This touched and partly mollified the public ! What a

funny nation we are here! and yet we are capable of great things, now and then, and very clever things at all times."

On May Day, 1891, he wrote to his daughter:

"Mother is going to give a sort of 'private theatricals' at the Embassy on the 10th of next month. I am now in communication with the people of the Française, who are all eager to lend their *concours*, and I think it promises thus far to be a success. The *pièce de résistance* will be *Une Conversion*, acted by Febvre and Baretta; the other pieces not yet settled, but the actors and actresses will be Febvre, Worms, Baretta, Brandes, Reichemberg, and Ludwig. A very pretty stage, with all the necessary scenery and decorations, is being prepared under Febvre's superintendence in the State ball-room of the Embassy, and what I want to know is whether you and Gerald cannot be tempted to come to us with the babies."

It turned out to be a party after his own heart. The programme comprised a little *lever de rideau*, acted by Mlle Brandes, of the Vaudeville; a poem recited by M. Worms of the Français; a piece called *Ma Voisine*, by Mlle Reichemberg and M. Coquelin *cadet*; and, finally, *Une Conversion*, acted by Madame Baretta, Mlle Ludwig, M. Febvre, and M. Falconier—all from the Théâtre Français.

After Paris, with "its clever people and clever talk, its good cooks, its *esprit*, its amours, its well-dressed women and witty men, who all do and say the same thing, exceedingly well but with a fatiguing repetition of ever the same type and the same note—brilliantly superficial"—Lytton found Bayreuth, where he spent his last holiday, a welcome contrast—"the life here rough

and simple, the sensations strong and serious, and Edith has been the most perfect travelling companion, the best and most soothing I could have had."

Lytton's health had for some time been failing, and less than six weeks before his death he wrote to his daughter from London, whither he had gone to consult the heart specialist, Sir Thomas Smith :

" I will not conceal from you the truth about myself —it would be no use. . . . I am told that all the trouble is the result of an overstrained life, which has taken too much out of me, and that henceforth I cannot live too quietly or carefully. Smith is most anxious that I should give up Paris ; but that question will probably settle itself a month or two hence. . . . I feel most sanguine that, with all the comforts of the Paris house and the kind care I shall have there, I shall rapidly mend."

On reaching Paris, exhausted by the journey, he went to bed and never left it. Yet he continued to work, to see his secretaries, and to perform the most urgent duties, although suffering great pain. " His manuscript," says his daughter, " was always beside him, and he was actually writing a line of a new poem when an arterial clot passed from the heart to the brain." [1]

Thus swiftly came the end. Lytton's death awakened universal sympathy, and French social and official circles hastened to pay their tribute to one whom many hold to have been the most popular ambassador ever sent from Great Britain to France.

The French Government decreed the unprecedented honour of a public funeral for his remains. The procession as it passed from the Embassy to the English church near by, and from thence to the Gare St. Lazare, was an impressive spectacle, witnessed by many thousands of spectators.

[1] November 27, 1891.

"It was," said *The Times*, "worthy of one great nation paying a last homage to the representative of another."

Amongst the French estimates of Lord Lytton's character, that written by Madame Flourens deserves quotation here :

"Il avait une qualité qui pour être qualifiée de secondaire n'en est pas moins très rare ; c'était une discrétion extrême. Il ne disait jamais ce qu'il voulait taire et quoiqu'il eût la parole facile, brillante, abondante, il en était absolument maître. J'ai rarement vu un homme doué de facultés si brillantes, si diverses, si complètes, et si spontanées."

To have great wit, eloquence, and perfect discretion is rare even in ambassadors. But when to these qualities is added a picturesque personality, it is no wonder Lytton was appreciated in Paris !

CHAPTER XVI

THE MARQUESS OF DUFFERIN

IT would not have been easy to find a fitting successor to such an ambassador as Lord Lytton had there not existed at that moment in the ranks of diplomacy a man of equally high rank and renown, equally cultured, witty, and magnetic, and one who, moreover, had also held the office of Viceroy of India.

The name of the Marquess of Dufferin occurred immediately both to Lord Salisbury and to the Queen.

Dufferin was then sixty-five and could look back on a long and distinguished career, including the Governor-Generalship of Canada. He came of the ancient Anglo-Irish family of the Blackwoods, and his mother was a granddaughter of R. B. Sheridan. Her brother had been a secretary of the Embassy in Paris in Granville's time, but had died young. Three years before, Dufferin, on returning from India, had accepted the Embassy at Rome. From thence he now wrote his chief at the Foreign Office (December 10, 1891) :

" Your proposal took me completely by surprise, for after having been given Rome in the circumstances in which my appointment occurred, I felt I had no pretensions to any further advancement, and when, in consequence of numerous newspaper reports, my name was bandied about with many others, I told the Prime Minister of Italy, as well as my colleagues and my friends, that there was no foundation for the rumours,

and that I had not the slightest expectation of being moved. Both I and Lady Dufferin have been very happy at Rome, and I think that both the King and the two Prime Ministers with whom I have come into contact have been fairly satisfied with the way in which I conducted whatever business we have had to transact together.

"But, of course, Paris is the great prize of the diplomatic profession, and to be given it is a very considerable honour."[1]

All the same, he could not help avowing to himself: "It is no light matter for anyone at my age to plunge into a new and unknown world, and to re-enter upon the heavy work of a first-class Embassy."

The new Ambassador entered upon his official duties in March. To his daughter he described his presentation to President Carnot (March 28, 1892):

"I have now got through all my official visits and my official reception—a tiresome affair in uniform. I liked Carnot; but my famous speech did not go off so well as I could have wished, for I suddenly forgot a particular word in it, and though I could easily have replaced it by an equivalent, I did not like to do so for fear of being accused of tampering with the text, which had been already communicated; so I was forced ignominiously to look down at my paper. Carnot read his speech without any pretence of reciting it. He was very gentleman-like and courteous, and he ended his oration with a personal compliment to myself, for which I was quite unprepared.

"The only other interesting thing we have witnessed has been the reception of Loti at the Academy. I had never been there before, and it gave me an opportunity

[1] The Opposition leader, Gladstone, wrote: "The country is to be congratulated; I at least do not know how any different and equally good appointment could have been made."

of seeing for the first time some of the most distinguished literary men of France. Amongst them was Renan, whom I had parted with forty-two years ago on the coast of Syria."

One would have supposed that a diplomat of Lord Dufferin's character and personality would instantly have met with the most cordial reception in Paris. But to his surprise and disappointment this was not so. He and Lady Dufferin had not been settled many days at the Embassy when they became aware of a coolness in official quarters and a marked tone of hostility in the Press. Articles were published reviewing his career and charging him with being the " life-long enemy " of France, and antagonistic to her foreign and colonial policy. It was alleged that he had taken the leading part in several transactions in which France had been worsted—particularly in Egypt and the annexation of Burma ; while even in his latest appointment at Rome he had shown himself decidedly anti-French.

Why, then, one writer asked, was such a man chosen to represent England at Paris at this time ? The answer he supplied was that Lord Dufferin's mission in the French capital was to undermine and to frustrate surreptitiously the cordial understanding recently established between France and Russia. In the management of such intrigues he was declared to be no less unscrupulous than adroit ; and it was publicly affirmed that he had been provided by the British Government with secret funds, amounting to millions of francs, for the purpose of executing this nefarious project. The peril to France was the greater, the journalist observed, because the French Ambassador in London, M. Waddington, had joined the conspiracy, and was

notoriously playing into the hands of the British Ambassador in Paris :

" Il est triste que dans cette lutte avec les habiletés anglaises nous ayons à la fois contre nous un ambassadeur de France dévoué à l'Angleterre."

Dufferin said nothing at the time, but the Press attacks rankled, as they always rankled with him. With the waning year came the collapse of the Panama Canal Company, and with it (in Dufferin's words) " one of the most tremendous rows ever known in the French Chamber, and that is saying a great deal." It was followed by a national explosion.

" The whole of France," he reported, " is one wild sea of denunciation, suspicion, and mutual recrimination, and even the phrases of 1793 are coming back into use. The ten representatives arrested are described as the first *' fournée ! '* and they have been carried off in *' la première charette '* ; and a deputy of the Chamber exclaimed, *' Voilà la tête que je veux ! '* quite in the Dantonesque style."

Against such a national temper of general suspicion the new British Ambassador made his way slowly. Then came the definite production of a pretended secret correspondence between Sir Henry Austin Lee, the Embassy Secretary, and Sir Villiers Lister at the Foreign Office, the object of which was to bribe deputies and journalists to oppose the Russian alliance. The whole diplomatic world was agog over the charges. Dufferin felt that at last the time had come to utter a public protest.

"On Monday night," he wrote his daughter (February 9), "when Gladstone is expatiating on his Home Rule, I also shall be on my legs, and I am going to do a very risky thing. In my speech at the banquet of the British Chamber of Commerce I am going to allude to the calumnies which have been propagated about my trying to corrupt the French Press and French public men by the distribution of enormous sums of money. But nobody would believe to what an extent this abominable lie has been credited, even in good society."

On the night in question (February 13), before a crowded assembly, he rose and said :

"I do not wish to refer to what is past in an ill-tempered or acrimonious spirit, for I am willing to believe that these attacks have emanated rather from the ignorance and *naïveté* than the malice of their authors ; but it is certainly new to my experience that an ambassador, the personal representative of his sovereign, should be caught by the *engrenage* of the domestic polemics of the country to whose Government he is accredited. Hitherto it has been considered that his great office and the majesty of the sovereign and country he represents, as well as courtesy, were sufficient to secure him in the enjoyment of that semi-conventual obscurity which is his proper element. But unfortunately these safeguards have not proved sufficient, and I have seen myself repeatedly accused in widely circulated papers, whose statements have undoubtedly carried conviction with them to vast numbers of people, of the most disgraceful and abominable conduct, of acts which, if proved, would justify my being summoned to the bar of a criminal court. It may, of course, be said that these assaults are beneath my notice. Well, they are so far beneath my notice that I have not thought it worth while to make them the subject of any official complaint ; but to-night we are

for the moment in England. . . . Moreover, as the monstrous fabrications to which Sir Edward Blount has referred would militate against my usefulness as an ambassador if even partially credited, I do not hesitate to take this opportunity to say that the whole series of assertions which has been so industriously propagated, including the absurd statement that I arrived in France furnished with an enormous sum of money—three millions of francs I think was the sum named—to be applied to the corruption of the French Press and of French politicians with the view of breaking up the Franco-Russian alliance, is not only untrue in the widest acceptation of that term, but that there is not, and there has never been, a shade or a shadow of substance in any of the various allegations which from time to time have been issued with the view of building up this inconceivable mystification. . . . The fact is that since I arrived in Paris I have not spent a sixpence that has not gone into the pocket of my butcher or baker, or that harmful but necessary lady, the avenger of the sin of Adam, whose bills every householder who values his domestic peace pays with alacrity and without examination—I mean the family *couturière*."

This speech was instantly received in France as a good-humoured and spirited appeal to the common sense and generosity of the nation against the malevolent attacks that had been made upon an ambassador. The editor of the *Figaro*, after some good-natured criticism, thus concluded his article :

"*Ceux de mes compatriotes qui veulent savoir ce que signifie l'epithète* gentleman-like *que les Anglais emploient si volontiers, le savent maintenant ! Et s'ils ne sont pas contents ils auront vraiment tort de le montrer—car ce ne serait pas* gentleman-like ! *En tout cas, ils ont lu un discours vraiment amusant et qui prouve que Lord Dufferin est non seulement le diplomate très fort et très*

dangereux que l'on connaissait, mais aussi un orateur adroit et spirituel que l'on ne soupçonnait pas—à Paris, du moins. Cet ambassadeur est un délicieux humoriste!"

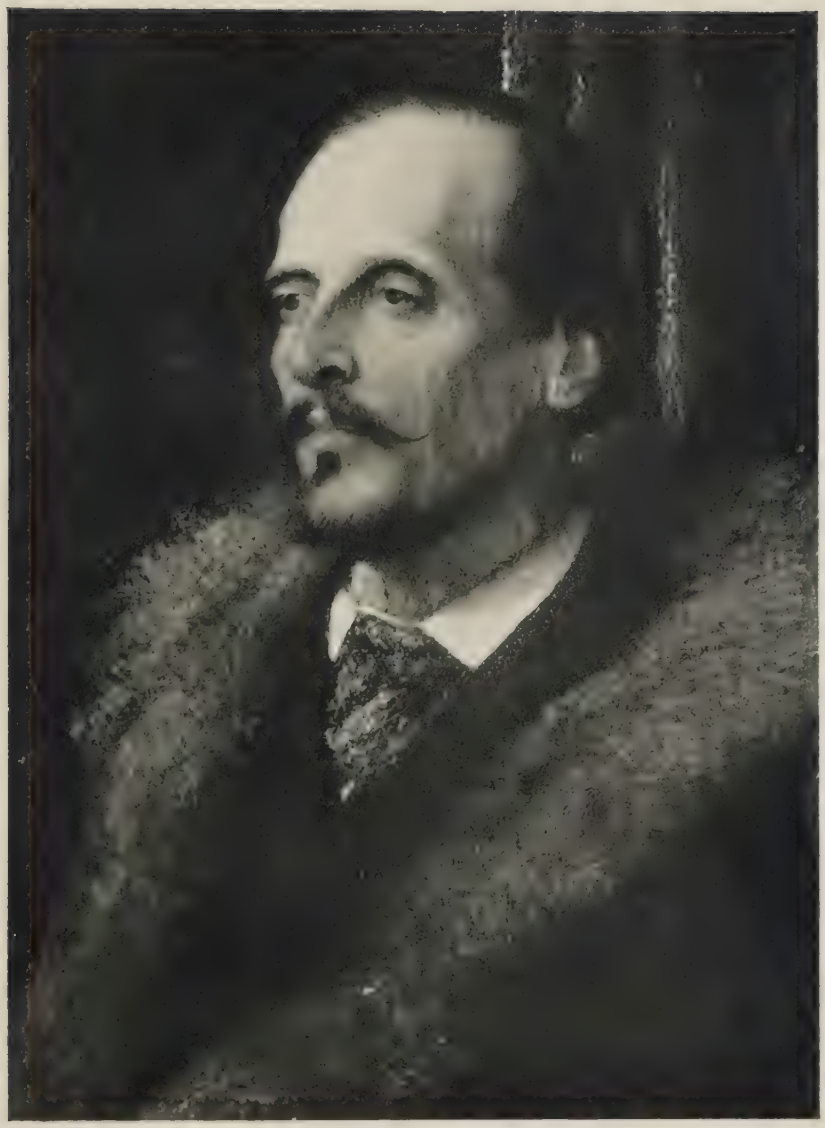
The Foreign Office, of whose approbation Lord Dufferin had not felt quite sure, agreed that the disclaimer was salutary and necessary. As for the English Press, it supported him cordially, and undoubtedly the effect of this plainspeaking was to convince his traducers that they had overshot their mark.

To his daughter the Ambassador wrote:

"The speech was wonderfully well received by the audience, all the women, and indeed I may say all the men, coming up afterwards to thank me and shake me by the hand, and all were extraordinarily enthusiastic. . . .

"The first person to compliment me was the Minister of Foreign Affairs himself, who said, '*Savez-vous que votre discours a eu un très grand succès?*' He has recurred to the subject in the same terms every time I have seen him since, and almost every Frenchman or woman I have lately met tells me that the myth so extensively believed has been now completely exploded. Even the newspapers that might have been expected to criticize have either given the speech without comment or have been fairly complimentary, though protesting that it was unjust to speak as if France were the only country in which ambassadors are occasionally criticized."

Some months later a mulatto named Norton, who had forged certain documents purporting to prove conclusively that British gold had been employed in bribing influential journalists and even deputies in Paris, was tried and condemned. It was pretended that these papers had been abstracted from the British Embassy; but when they came to be read out in the French



THE MARQUESS OF DUFFERIN.
Ambassador, 1892–1896.
(*From the portrait by G. F. Watts.*)

To face p. 306.

Chamber the whole case broke down under an avalanche of ridicule.

In April 1893 the President, M. Carnot, opened the annual exhibition of pictures at the Salon, when Lord Dufferin notes that his own portrait, by Benjamin Constant, was much admired by the public and praised by the French journals.

A passage in a letter which Dufferin wrote at this time deserves to be quoted for its application to-day :

" I believe there is growing up amongst the mass of the French population a far stronger disinclination to war than has hitherto existed. Colonial wars have always been an abomination to them. The French peasant does not understand his son being sent to die of fever in a Chinese jungle or to be run through the body by an African lance. But the universality of military service has impressed every French family in the country with a sense of the misery which war might entail ; and, though the recollection of their last military disasters may fade from their memory, the general conviction of the risk and calamities entailed by war is more likely to deepen than to disappear as time goes on."

In October the visit to Paris of the Russian naval officers, whose appearance was hailed as the outward and visible sign of Russia's friendship and sympathy with France, excited very lively demonstrations in Paris. They drove about the city in carriages, preceded and followed by guards-of-honour ; and Lord Dufferin notes that for eight days past the main thoroughfares had been rendered impassable by the crowds thronging for any sight of them. Men and women ran alongside to touch or kiss the hands of the officers ; they were besieged at their residences, and were compelled to come out frequently on the balconies to receive public ovations,

when they sometimes cut their gloves into pieces for distribution to the concourse below. Admiral Avellan (an old acquaintance of Lord Dufferin's) received nineteen thousand letters asking for his photograph, his signature, or some other personal token ; the Russian and French flags waved together in every direction ; and the Rue de la Paix " was roofed with bunting." There was a magnificent banquet at the Elysée Palace, but Dufferin and the other foreign ambassadors were invited only to a State ball on the same evening.

In October 1893 Dufferin attended the imposing funeral of the aged Marshal MacMahon, ex-President of the Republic.

" It took place on a lovely day—bright sunshine and a warm air. The procession started from the Madeleine. The steps leading up to the building are very high and broad, and they presented a magnificent spectacle, being crowded with officers, civil and military, in their brilliant uniforms. The whole area was ablaze with gold and steel and stars and plumes—shining helmets and laced cocked hats rising tier above tier in a variegated bank of colour, for which the Grecian, shrouded in black and silver, provided a striking background. After we had waited for about an hour, the funeral car began to move. . . . The streets were lined with troops, and behind the troops stood thousands and thousands of people, while other thousands looked on from the windows of the six-storied houses which form the Rue Royale, through which the *cortège* passed. After traversing the Place de la Concorde, the procession turned up towards the Arc de Triomphe, and then crossed the river to the Champ de Mars and the Invalides. When the Mass, presided over by the Archbishop of Paris, was concluded, the whole assembly streamed out into the *Cour d'honneur*, where the Prime Minister and the Minister of War delivered addresses. After this, the funeral car was

removed to the entrance of the Invalides and in front of the great esplanade, where the entire garrison of Paris was drawn up under arms, and was subsequently moved, regiment by regiment, past the bier, each regiment and its officers and colours saluting the dead soldier that lay within it. This part of the ceremony took more than an hour, and it was four o'clock before everything was over, the procession having left the Madeleine at eleven."

Dufferin was very fond of topical descriptions such as this. The wonder is, how he found time for it all.

During nearly the whole of Dufferin's term (from 1893 to 1896) the Siamese question was the most important affair that exercised his diplomacy, and placed at one moment a considerable strain on the friendly relations between the two Governments. Siam is situated between Burma and the Indo-Chinese possessions of the French, so that its independence is a matter of concern to British India. With the quarrel between France and Siam England did not wish to interfere; but the Foreign Office insisted that the territorial concessions demanded from the Siamese by the French should neither operate to the dismemberment of Siam nor diminish or weaken that kingdom to an extent that might prejudice the security of the Burmese frontier on the western side. England was also bound to safeguard her own subjects and their commercial interests within Siam. In seeking to bring the negotiations to a reasonable conclusion Dufferin's "patience and temper were sometimes considerably tried."

Luckily there were distractions at the Embassy.

"We are to have a dance here on Friday. It was in this very ballroom that I embarked with a young

lady on a valse for the first time in my life, about fifty years ago. How little I then thought I should be here as Ambassador ! Indeed, my whole life has been a series of surprises, from the day Lord John Russell proposed that I should be a lord-in-waiting. . . . I have just received your New Year's gift, the two volumes of Scott's letters. You could not have given me a book which I should more value, for I love Sir Walter Scott with all my heart ; and, my mother excepted, I think he has done more to form my character than any other influence ; for he is the soul of purity, chivalry, respect for women, and healthy religious feelings."

In a letter of January 1894 to Mr. Hepburn, Lord Dufferin refers to the death of M. Waddington, whom he had visited not long before at his country house in France.

" M. Waddington was an old friend of mine, for he came out to me in Syria, when I naturally took him for an Englishman until he said, ' I must now go and see my Commissioner,' on which I exclaimed, ' But I am your Commissioner.' ' No,' he said, ' Monsieur Bedard is, for I am a Frenchman.' Renan was there at the same time, as well as Chanzy and Ducot. Chanzy and I became great friends, and he was afterwards French Ambassador at the same time with me at St. Petersburg when the poor Emperor was murdered."

At the annual dinner given in March 1894 by the British Chamber of Commerce in Paris, Lord Dufferin again made a speech intended for a much larger audience. This time he reviewed the state of Europe in the spirit of one who, surveying the Continent from the vantage point of long experience and wide knowledge of current affairs, could predict the continuance of peace among the nations. In the political outlook, he said, no portents

of serious trouble were discernible. With regard, especially, to the two great Powers with whom England was in immediate contact, Russia in Asia and France in Europe, he relied upon the Russian Emperor's well-known magnanimity and sense of honour for concurrence in the preservation of tranquillity on their Asiatic frontiers.

"France of late has shown, as have done the other nations of Europe, considerable colonial activity, and as we ourselves have long been engaged in similar colonial activity, we occasionally run up against each other in the cane brakes of Africa, or in the fever jungles of Indo-China. But what are these desultory troubles and local considerations in comparison with the great stream of tendency to two such glorious nations, who from the dawn of history have together held aloft the standard of civilization and progress in every line and walk of human enterprise? They are but as the ripple and angry splashing which mark the occasional sands and shoals of a mighty river which rushes with unrivalled majesty on its appointed way."

If, Dufferin pursued, quarrels and bad blood should arise between France and England "over a few acres of African swamp or a clump of thatched villages in the tropics," it would be for diplomatists to apply remedies to effect reconciliations.

But a British Ambassador who had been Governor-General of Canada might have remembered Voltaire's reference to "a few acres of snow," before he dismissed so lightly our great Nigerian Colony in the making.[1]

Lord Dufferin wrote to his daughter:

[1] "*Vous savez que ces deux nations sont en guerre pour quelques arpens de neige, et qu'elles dépensent pour cette belle guerre beaucoup plus que tout le Canada ne vaut.*"—"*Candide.*"

"You will see I have been making a speech. It seems to have pleased people here, and it has not been found fault with in London, which is a comfort. All my life long, whenever I have made a speech I have had to consider at least two and sometimes three audiences, like the circus-riders who have to stand on the backs of several galloping horses at once."

In a letter to him from London, Sir Donald Wallace said:

"It may perhaps interest you to know that the French Ambassador here spoke to me last night in most sympathetic—I might almost say enthusiastic—terms about your admirable speech to the English Chamber of Commerce. Of course, you have seen how well it has been received by the Press all over Europe."

Dinners and garden-parties at the Embassy; diplomatic entertainments, theatres, the usual flow of social life at high tide in Paris, and a constant succession of guests who found a welcome and room at the Embassy; visits from men of letters, French and English; conversations with Ministers and politicians of various nationalities on their passage through France; an excursion to Chantilly, where they met the Orleans Princes—all these things fill Lord Dufferin's journal for the early summer of 1894.

In June came the assassination at Lyons of President Carnot, with whom he had always been on such cordial terms.

After the funeral, when Madame Carnot was about to quit the Elysée, Lord and Lady Dufferin visited her there. Lord Dufferin, who was much affected by the interview, wrote to the Queen that he had never seen any lady bear herself in so dignified and noble a manner.

She was very calm when talking of herself and her sorrows and the change in her life ; but when she turned to Lord Dufferin and began expressing " her deep sense of Queen Victoria's goodness in writing the letter that she had received from Your Majesty, she displayed such a force and energy of feeling as no words can convey."

The choice of the two Chambers for a new President fell upon M. Casimir Périer, who was confidently expected to restore the stability of ministerial cabinets—whose tenure of power was generally so brief. But Casimir Périer held office for less than six months.

Such a *coup de théâtre*, as the French termed it, was startling, and Lord Dufferin wrote that

" the excitement and surprise caused by it were very considerable. But," he added, " it is certainly remarkable that, although France thus suddenly found herself without either an executive Government or a chief of the State, not only was there no disturbance of public order, but there does not seem to have been the slightest apprehension of anything of the kind."

It was certainly a gratifying advance in stability for the Third Republic.

In a dispatch to the Foreign Office he dwelt on the difficult and distasteful position of the elected representative of a great nation, whose influence over the counsels of his own Ministers might be reduced below that of a constitutional king. At the election two candidates were proposed by the Moderate Party, against a third for whom the Radical Party voted. When the Radical candidate failed at the first ballot to obtain an absolute majority, the two Moderate sections combined at the second ballot in favour of a single candidate, M. Félix Faure, who came in at the head of the poll.

In April 1896 Lord Dufferin wrote to a friend: "My term comes to an end on the 21st of June, when the clock will have struck seventy." On June 2, at the annual banquet of the British Chamber of Commerce in Paris, the Ambassador delivered the last of the many speeches that he had made from high places in the public service. It struck, as was natural, the valedictory note. He spoke of his regret at leaving "this delightful capital, where Lady Dufferin and myself have lived so happily for the last four years, where we have had the opportunity of renewing affectionate relations with our French friends of former days, and where we have formed so many ties." He acknowledged the courtesy and consideration which he had received from the French Ministers and politicians with whom he had from time to time been engaged in handling "the thorny problems" of adjusting international claims and interests that were often inevitably contrary. In regard to the Press of Paris, he touched very lightly on bygone misrepresentations of his motives and character, and on the fulfilment of his confident prevision that they would be effaced by the lapse of time and a better understanding of him personally.

"It is true," he said, "when I was first subjected to its acute and patriotic observation the Press was disposed to exhibit towards me an attitude—well, I will say an attitude of coyness. But there were artificial circumstances existing at the time which sufficiently accounted for what happened; and knowing in my own heart how anxious I was to discharge the duties of my office in a spirit of loyalty and conciliation, convinced that no outsider could have come to France with a higher appreciation of the qualities of its inhabitants, or who could have already worked more harmoniously with its

representatives abroad, I had little doubt that your discriminating journalists would eventually recognize in me the well-wisher of their country."

The Ambassador went on to speak of the Diplomatic Service, in which, however, he had passed fewer years than most of his predecessors.

"I cannot," he said, "complain of the rule which fixes the age at which I have arrived—and which no power on earth will induce me to communicate to the ladies present—as the epoch for the compulsory retirement of ambassadors. My only doubt is whether it should not be enforced at an earlier period. The Diplomatic Service is undoubtedly one of the most advantageous of the liberal professions, but it has certain drawbacks in these days of intense competition. It can only be entered after a severe examination which implies an expensive education prolonged through many preparatory years. The earlier stages of the career are unremunerative, and the work desultory, mechanical, and often uninteresting. Its later phases, however, are most attractive, full of responsibility and importance, and its highest prizes are as worthy of a man's ambition as any at the disposal of the Crown. But the one thing that casts a shadow over the prospects of those who follow it, as indeed is the case in most professions, is the slowness, the uncertainty, and sometimes the stagnation of promotion. In this last event the younger members are suffocated by the solid crust of the ranks above them, while these in their turn grow stale and disheartened amid the monotony and routine of their trivial though necessary duties.

"Now change and advancement are the very life of every career. It is the oxygen which revivifies our blood, brightens our intelligence, stimulates our initiative, and I assure you it is the greatest possible consolation to those who are stepping down from their high station to think that they are making room for

younger men. Even so, such a break with the past cannot fail to be painful, for it is not only the conclusion of a chapter, but it is the closing of a book. Though a man's life may be extended a few years beyond the span of its official existence, its record can never be more than a dry appendix printed in a smaller type, and on the face of it neither inviting nor worthy of perusal. Nor at such a turning-point can one help recognizing with a sense of regret one's many shortcomings in the service of advancement of its interests. Though brought into contact with great events and concerned with momentous issues, one's rôle is rather that of the object floating on the stream and indicating its course than that of the controlling force which hurries it along and determines its destination; for political results are now less the fruit of individual effort than of those mighty popular energies which have been vitalized by our modern civilization."

Dufferin's survey of Europe and the conditions of modern diplomacy is amongst his most famous utterances:

"What do we see around us? The whole of Europe is little better than a standing camp numbering millions of armed men, while a double row of frowning and opposing fortresses bristles along every frontier. Our harbours are stuffed and the seas swarm with ironclad navies, to whose numbers I am forced to admit England had been obliged in self-defence to add her modest quota. Even in the remotest East the passion for military expansion had displayed an unexpected development. In fact, thanks to the telegraph, the globe itself has become a mere bundle of nerves, and the slightest disturbance at any one point is felt at every point of its sensitive surface. We are told by the poets of old that when Zeus nodded the golden halls of his Olympus shook to their foundation. To-day it would suffice for any one of half a

dozen august personages to speak above his breath or unwittingly, and, with electricity, the existing condition of system would be overset. . . . Well, ladies and gentlemen, it is to prevent catastrophes of this kind that we are but a poor and feeble folk and our calling a sorry preservative against such dangers, but, such as it is, the best device that human ingenuity has been able to discover. After all, a very thin wire proves a perfectly effective lightning conductor, and for over fifty years, thanks to this unpretending agency, an unbroken peace has been maintained between your native land and the country with whose prosperity and welfare your own interests are so closely connected."

This " last dying speech and confession," as he called it, went the round of the European Press and evoked much comment. The English thought, as Sir Alfred Lyall says, that " the final words of their Ambassador were honourable to himself and his country, and paid a due tribute of admiration to the distinguished career which was now terminating." [1]

There was a final garden-party at the Embassy, for which about three thousand invitations had been issued. A heavy thunderstorm drove everyone indoors, where, notwithstanding, notes Lord Dufferin in his *Diary*, " they enjoyed themselves very much—the French people being always so gay and good-humoured."

Farewell visits followed the presentation to Lady Dufferin, by the ladies of the English colony in Paris, of an address accompanied by objects of artistic value ; and on June 21 Lord Dufferin received general congratulations upon his seventieth birthday. The last ceremony that he attended officially was the funeral of the Duc de Nemours.

[1] Lyall : *Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava.*

On October 13 Lord Dufferin presented his letters of recall at the Elysée. The contrast between his coming and his going was great: the French had learnt to esteem his high qualities in the five years of his embassy.

Nevertheless, it cannot truly be said that the general relations between the two countries had improved in the interval.

CHAPTER XVII

MONSON: "PIN-PRICKS" AND AFTER

WITH the departure from the Embassy of the slender, magnetic Dufferin came a return to an older and sturdier type of British Ambassador in the person of Sir Edmund Monson.

Himself also the son of a peer, forty years before Monson had served as attaché at Paris under the second Lord Cowley; he had been five years at Washington with Lord Lyons, and had found himself in his early 'thirties side-tracked in the service, which he had quitted in disgust. Having tried to get into Parliament and failed, after some years of public unemployment he was fain to make his peace again with the Foreign Office, and at an age when Lytton and Dufferin had occupied high diplomatic posts Monson accepted the Consulship of the Azores. Some years of obscurity in Hungary and in the South American republics followed; by degrees Monson's sterling merit, and a sober steadiness which recalled his former chief Lyons, was rewarded, and when nearing sixty he found himself at last Minister at Brussels. Who could then have suspected that there was still time for him to capture the chief prize of the Diplomatic Service? But Gladstone, now again Premier, had not forgotten him; the Vienna Embassy fell vacant in 1893 and Monson went thither at a bound. So well did he acquit himself there that Paris, which Lord

Lansdowne and Lord Currie had both coveted in turn, now fell to him.

Apart from the honour, Monson had little cause for satisfaction in the prospect before him. Paris in 1896 was no bed of roses for a British Ambassador. The international situation, uncomfortable and threatening as it had been in 1886, seemed to grow worse daily. It was not only the friction with France over Siam—the British occupation of Egypt was, as Sir Edward Grey said, a "perpetual exasperation to the French, and their attitude a constant irritant to us"; there were constant disputes and regrettable incidents in West Africa and on the so-called "French shore" of Newfoundland. Then there were the strained British relations with Russia, an absolute monarchy now in alliance with Republican France. The recent Jameson Raid awakened French apprehensions for the Boer republics. On the whole, as one Conservative statesman declared frankly to the Foreign Minister, it was "evident that war between ourselves and France must come, and it would be better to have it at once." [1]

A pretty prospect! But Sir Edmund Monson faced it manfully, hoping for the best, but perhaps fearing the worst. On December 8, 1896, the usual agreeable ceremony took place in the Faubourg St. Honoré, which may be compared with that inaugurating Lord Granville's embassy seventy years before.

"M. Crozie, the diplomatic Master of the Ceremonies" (we read in the official account), drove in the President's State carriage to the British Embassy, escorted by cuirassiers. Sir Edmund Monson entered the carriage and, followed by the entire staff in other carriages, was driven to the Elysée. A battalion of the line, drawn up

[1] Viscount Grey of Fallodon: *Twenty-five Years* (1892–1916).

in the court, rendered military honours, its band playing *God Save the Queen*. On alighting at the foot of the steps the new Ambassador was received by two officers of the President's Military Household and conducted by M. Crozie to the Grand Salon, where M. Félix Faure, the President of the Republic, awaited him, surrounded by M. Hanotaux, the Foreign Minister, and numerous officers of rank. The Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Her Majesty Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, then addressed the President of the Republic as follows :

" Monsieur le Président : the Queen, my august Sovereign, having deigned to confide to me the high distinction of representing Her Majesty as Her Ambassador to the Government of the Republic, I have the honour of placing in your hands the Royal letter which accredits me in that capacity."

After a tribute to the President, Sir Edmund proceeded :

" The Government of the Queen, convinced of the reciprocal disposition of the Government of the Republic, firmly holds to the maintenance and development of the good relations which have so long subsisted between the two countries."

Here the Ambassador paused, perhaps to take breath, perhaps to permit his auditors to admire this diplomatic formula, which in other circles was, alas, being derided as a paradox.

" Our true interests," he went on, " evidently demand the perpetuation of this cordial understanding, which, while conferring on the two nations all the advantages

of a frank and loyal intimacy, will at the same time come to their aid in facilitating the accomplishment of the civilizing mission which has been imposed upon them by an identical destiny."

The President, resplendent in evening dress and broad crimson ribbon, himself unquestionably the most imposing figure in the list of the chief magistrates of the Third Republic from that day to this, was not to be outdone in courtesy. His tribute to the Queen, then on the eve of her Diamond Jubilee, left nothing to be desired, and his praise of the Ambassador himself was highly flattering.

"The remarkable qualities of tact, prudence, and moderation which have marked the course of your long and brilliant career, and which recommended you to the choice of Her Britannic Majesty for the lofty mission you are called on to fulfil, are a guarantee to us of the way in which you will meet the expectations of your Government as well as our own."

And for the ensuing year and a half—thanks partly to the good will engendered by the Queen's Jubilee—Monson got through his embassy without overt unpleasantness. In spite of its being the day of "instability of French Ministries and the unbridled violence of faction," in June 1898 Monson succeeded in ending one source of trouble; he signed a convention with M. Hanotaux, which practically settled the complicated question of Nigerian boundaries. Then, in the same year, came the Dreyfus scandals to convulse France. English criticism of this terrible exposure caused the chronic Anglophobia to become virulent. Upon the heels of this, in September 1898, followed the Fashoda incident. A French officer, Major Marchand, heading a small expedition from the

SIR EDMUND MONSON.
Ambassador, 1896–1903.

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French Congo, had planted the French flag at a place within the boundaries of the Egyptian Sudan. The Sirdar, Sir Herbert Kitchener, fresh from his victory at Khartoum, passing that way, ordered the French intruders to lower their flag and decamp. Whereupon Marchand struck an attitude and refused to move without an order from his Government.

Now, as far back as the previous December, Sir Edmund Monson had informed the then French Foreign Minister, M. Hanotaux, that, although prepared to recognize the French claim to the northern and eastern shores of Lake Tchad, Her Majesty's Government "must not be understood to admit that any other Power than Great Britain has any claim to occupy any part of the Valley of the Nile." And even three years before, Sir Edward Grey had stated in Parliament that a French advance into the Nile Valley would be viewed by this country as "an unfriendly act."

Monson immediately called upon M. Delcassé and reported (September 18):

"M. Delcassé to-day said that he had no knowledge of the position of M. Marchand; but,—'Let it be assumed that he is at Fashoda, as the English newspapers assert; are the French Government to understand that Her Majesty's Government say that he has no right to be there?'

"I answered that while there was no doubt in my mind as to the wish of Her Majesty's Government to live in perfect amity with that of France, I had equally no hesitation in saying that they consider that Fashoda, as a dependency of the Khalifate, has now passed into the hands of Great Britain and Egypt.

"As to the question of M. Marchand's right to be there, M. Delcassé was as well aware as I that England had very openly let France understand that any incursion

into the Upper Nile basin would be considered by us as an unfriendly act. Why, then, did they send this mission, when they must know what serious results its success in reaching this point must inevitably produce?"[1]

Delcassé replied that, in the first place, France had never recognized the British sphere of influence in the Upper Nile region, and, secondly, that there was no Marchand Mission properly so called, that the gallant Major was merely acting under the orders of his local French Congo commissioner—his was simply a "mission of civilization in an unclaimed land," he was an explorer, a pioneer, etc.

Whereupon the Ambassador told the Minister frankly that the situation in the Upper Nile was at that moment a dangerous one. "We have no wish to pick a quarrel, but, having long ago given a warning, France must not be surprised at England's resentment." "The conversation," concluded Sir Edmund, "was conducted on both sides with perfect calmness. . . . M. Delcassé said, 'France does not desire a quarrel.'"

Lord Salisbury wrote to Monson:

"Whether in times of Egyptian or Dervish dominion, the region in which M. Marchand was found has never been without an owner, and his expedition into it with an escort of a hundred Senegalese troops has no political effect, nor can any political significance be attached to it."

If the tone of the diplomats was thus calm and reasonable it was hardly the case with the Press and public outside. To judge by the diatribes of some of the English newspapers, France had actually provided a

[1] F.O.: Monson to Salisbury.

casus belli, and this view was shared by some English statesmen.

"It would be a great calamity," said Lord Aldwyn, Chancellor of the Exchequer, "that after a peace of more than eighty years we should be launched into a great war. But there are greater evils than war."

It need hardly be added, that if the English Press was violent, that of Paris on this occasion surpassed itself. There was only one course to take—"*Aux armes!*"

Both sides promptly issued Blue books, and, after a great deal more inflammatory talk outside the Chancelleries, M. Delcassé had the courage to brave French public opinion and recall Major Marchand from Fashoda. The boulevard Press was shocked, but the trouble was over.

As the year drew to a close, reviewing in his mind the events which had so exasperated public opinion, Monson felt that the time was opportune for a little plain speaking on his part. Had it been consulted, Downing Street would have disapproved, but the Ambassador remembered that his predecessor, Lord Dufferin, had used the opportunity afforded by the annual dinner of the British Chamber of Commerce in Paris to reach a wider public. He himself had spoken there the previous year, but his speech then, dealing merely with diplomatic platitudes, had gone without remark.

But this time the accents of a British Ambassador at Paris were destined to resound over the whole civilized world.

Sir Edmund began with a reference to the "'new diplomacy,' which is said to have come into fashion and to have pretty well superseded the practice in which we old fogies had been brought up."

"The new diplomacy, if I understand rightly, is a concession to the *fin de siècle* impatience, and is chiefly due to the enterprise of the Press, to which the diplomatists already owe so much; but it is also in a measure due to the mother-country of inventions, to the originality of the American mind, which is ever restlessly bent upon improving diplomatists of the old school off the face of the earth."

After paying a tribute to the culture and eloquence of the American Ambassadors Hay and Bayard, and regretting that he could not boast their oratorical gifts, he quoted, not for the first time, Lord Clarendon's dictum that "The British diplomatist required no other special art than to be perfectly honest, truthful, and straightforward."

"I am anxious," continued Sir Edmund, "to declare in the most categorical manner that our policy, much as it has been attacked, has been based exclusively upon those characteristics. It has not been without much reflection, I might even say anxiety, that I have decided to take advantage of this occasion to depart somewhat from the traditional limits by which a diplomatist is hampered, and which, until recent years, kept his mouth shut or reduced him to the enunciation of commonplaces. The New Diplomacy encourages us to speak out; but there are still the obligations of discretion, of courtesy, and of good feeling, which we must be careful not to transgress, even if at the risk of being branded by that terrible epithet 'priggish,' which is, I suppose, held in some quarters to be the antithesis of 'frank.' For my own part, however, I own a preference for diplomacy founded on the well-worn maxim, *Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.*"

He went on to say that there were, towards the close of every year, two remarkable phenomena, the one

celestial, the other terrestrial, which yet have become familiar to all in England—shooting stars in the firmament and political stars on provincial platforms.

"Members of Parliament are bound to visit their constituents during the Recess to give an account of their stewardship, and it was inevitable that speakers should touch upon the burning questions of the day."

Amongst these themes had been Fashoda, and some of the English comments had not given any particular pleasure to France. But, at any rate, in the Ambassador's opinion, whether judicious or not, they had served the useful purpose of impressing upon foreign countries the conviction that "the advisers of the Crown represented at a critical period the sentiment of a united people and not of a political party only. Great Britain was unanimous on that subject, and any shilly-shallying was useless."

"It is not the usual function of an Ambassador, especially when speaking in the capital of the country to which he is accredited, to attempt a public defence of the policy of the Government which he represents. . . . But upon this exceptional occasion I cannot forbear to state that, while it is true that no other attitude could have been taken from the very outset, there was not the slightest reason why doubt should have existed in any quarter. Journalists, pamphleteers, comic writers, and caricature artists may innocently have done much harm in this respect. Even some political speakers have contributed to the mischief. I venture to hope that by this time the idea of our being unduly squeezable and prone to make graceful but impolitic concessions has been thoroughly exploded. At the same time, bluster is not only unbecoming, it is inexpedient and unworthy. . . .

"England herself, secure, as we believe, from much

that causes apprehension on the Continent, while jealously guarding her own interests and steadfastly determined not to permit any encroachment upon her rights, has no aggressive designs which need inspire anxiety in those who will deal honestly and justly with her. . . . We ask France to disabuse herself of all suspicion of unfair intention or of any general animosity in England—we are ready to believe—need I say that I myself believe fervently?—that the bulk of the French nation has no animosity against the English—and to meet us on every question at issue with an honest desire for equitable arrangement, with no thought of diplomatic triumph, or of driving a one-sided bargain."

He closed his remarks with a word of counsel to French officials and the French Press:

"*I would earnestly ask them to discountenance and to abstain from the continuance of that policy of pin-pricks which, while it can only procure an ephemeral gratification to a short-lived Ministry, must inevitably perpetuate across the Channel an irritation which a high-spirited nation must eventually feel to be intolerable.* I would entreat them to resist the temptation to try to thwart British enterprise by petty manœuvres such as I grieve to say are suggested by the proposal to set up educational establishments as rivals to our own in the newly conquered provinces of the Sudan. Such an ill-considered provocation, to which I confidently trust no official countenance will be given, might well have the effect of converting that policy of forbearance, of refraining to take full advantage of our recent victories, into the adoption of measures which, though they evidently find favour with no inconsiderable party in England, are not, I presume, the object at which French sentiment is aiming."

This really temperate speech was received with tumultuous approval by all the English present. The

THE BRITISH EMBASSY. IONIC HALL. [*Photo: F. Contet.*

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tone was friendly and the exhortation timely. But if it had been the ravings of a rabid Francophobe it could hardly have provoked a greater sensation. "Amazing Indiscretion of the English Ambassador," "France Insulted: Is it a Declaration of War?" are samples of two newspaper headlines.

Some journals, like the *Univers*, bade France prepare for the worst, and called incontinently for fortifications and cruisers. The Legitimist *Gazette de France* said that if France had been a monarchy the British Ambassador would instantly have received his passports. "British arrogance," declared *L'Intransigeant*, "was never so clearly displayed." "Great Britain," in the judgment of *L'Eclair*, "has in the Fashoda affair treated France with a brutality which it is hard to forget and which even French pin-pricks could not justify."

"His attitude," said *La Liberté*, "which would deserve in a young Secretary of Embassy a sharp reproof from his chiefs, is quite inexplicable; it was not worth while having gone grey in diplomatic harness to commit at the end of his career a *gaffe* which would have sufficed to discredit a novice. . . . We doubt whether his freak will much contribute to improve his personal position in Paris, where his predecessors had accustomed us to more tact and discretion, even in the most critical moments. They spoke less of politeness, but practised it better."

M. Delcassé was besought to ask Lord Salisbury whether it was by his orders that the English Ambassador in Paris "fancied himself authorized not only to represent the Foreign Office but to direct French foreign policy."

When the report of the "Pin-pricks Speech" (as it came to be called) was read in England, it was felt that

Sir Edmund Monson had said the needful thing in quite the right way, and that his action in breaking through a diplomatic rule was really the best sort of diplomacy.

"At this time of day," commented *The Times*, "it is mere affectation to ignore the tendency which has run through French foreign policy for a long time past to thwart this country whenever possible, not in pursuit of any solid French interest, but merely for the love of annoying us. . . . To represent the Ambassador's speech as an attempt to dictate the policy of the French Foreign Office is to shut the door upon the frank interchange of sentiments which alone can avert disastrous misunderstandings."

Nevertheless, Lord Salisbury was not quite pleased over the explosion, and a few days later a *communiqué* from the Embassy was circulated by the Havas Agency.

"The comments elicited by the recent speech of Sir Edmund Monson at the banquet of the British Chamber of Commerce," it said, "show that the Ambassador's idea has not been understood, or that it was not presented with sufficient clearness." Sir Edmund in no way wished to mix himself up in French politics, had a great regard and admiration for France and the French, and would never think of giving offence. Read to-day it seems rather a foolish *communiqué*; but it served the purpose. The Ambassador was told that he was forgiven and the incident was closed.

Unhappily, in the next year the Boer War broke out and Anglophobia reached a height, not merely in France, but all over the Continent, which it had rarely reached before. "Pin-pricks" which had been generally

confined to acts of British policy, were now replaced by savage and vulgar stiletto thrusts, which did not even spare the venerable Queen-Empress herself and the Heir to the Throne, who had always been partial to France and was popular in that country. The outbreak of war, too, unluckily coincided with the preparations for the Paris Exposition of 1900. A decade before the Prince had been Chairman of the British Section, and he was now asked by Lord Salisbury to act again in that capacity. The Prince went promptly to work with his customary zeal and vigour; but by the time the buildings were nearly ready for occupation international relations were so strained, and the attacks upon England, the Queen, and himself in the Paris Press so flagrant, that he felt he could not go on. In spite of all the persuasion of his Royal mother and the Prime Minister, His Royal Highness took a firm stand. He wrote that it would be "impossible for him to attend the opening." He called Lord Salisbury's attention to a specially scurrilous article in *La Patrie*, and added that there was a likelihood that the Paris mob might insult the British uniform which he would wear if he attended the opening ceremony. His presence, in his opinion, would be a slight to the Queen and a proof of indifference to the "vile lampoons of Her Majesty."

"No more to be said," was Lord Salisbury's terse endorsement of the Prince's letter.

But, as the future King Edward's biographer remarks, "it proved in the end a lovers' quarrel which, having run its course, served to intensify the old mutual affection." [1]

None of his predecessors had ever had a more trying

[1] Sir Sidney Lee: *King Edward.*

time than Sir Edmund Monson underwent during this period, but his courtesy and straightforwardness were unfailing. When the Anglophobes of the Press, platform, and Chamber had done their worst, the tide turned, the inevitable reaction set in. As Lord Fitzmaurice said, "The French of a litigious diplomacy, the France of the Boulevard newspaper, is not really the French nation."

In fact, the European situation in the first years of the new century, when King Edward VII had succeeded to the throne, was bringing home to statesmen in both France and England the wisdom of sinking their old feuds and drawing closer together in the presence of looming dangers. The King was resolved upon the establishment of an entirely fresh Entente Cordiale. Monson contributed his own share to the *rapprochement*, which reached a climax in the Agreements of April 4, 1904. The advantages resulting from a settlement of the long-standing disputes about Egypt, Newfoundland, and Siam overbalanced any risk of a future breach over Morocco. Lord Rosebery and some others were perhaps dubious; but the four chief persons concerned were satisfied—the King, Lord Lansdowne, M. Delcassé, and Sir Edmund Monson—and their satisfaction was justified by the events of the next few years.

In January 1905 Sir Edmund, having passed the diplomatic age-limit and beheld the Entente Cordiale at last an accomplished fact, retired from the Embassy. The French Government showed its appreciation of his services by awarding him the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour, and his sovereign bestowed upon him a baronetcy. Some surprise was expressed at his not having been made a peer. Perhaps he should have been. He was the only Ambassador of the century who had

not received that honour. But Monson (who, it may be recalled, had long been heir-presumptive to a peerage) was comparatively a poor man: he let it be known that it would have been an embarrassment.[1]

[1] Sir Edmund Monson survived his retirement nearly five years, dying October 28, 1909.

CHAPTER XVIII

LORD BERTIE AND THE WAR

DEBONAIR, fond of society and good living, carefully groomed, with garments of a certain elegant antiquity of cut, Sir Francis Leveson Bertie was the type of the elderly aristocrat of Mayfair. He was essentially, too, a Foreign Office man, who for nearly forty years had spent his mornings reading dispatches for his chief in Downing Street and his evenings at his club or at the Opera. Bertie's father had been that "clever old Lord Abingdon," once famous at Oxford; his mother was a Vernon Harcourt, and his wife a Wellesley, daughter of Earl Cowley, the former Ambassador, so that none could say that Bertie, besides being the complete diplomatist, was not also equipped with inner knowledge of English political life and its influences.

When, therefore, in 1903 this Foreign Office undersecretary, already verging upon sixty, was dispatched to his first foreign Court and to an Embassy so important as that at Rome, who could be astonished, for had he not had all his life the affairs of Italy and the rest of Europe at his finger ends? Nor were any astonished when only eighteen months later he was given the prize of the Diplomatic Service and promoted to succeed Sir Edmund Monson in the Faubourg St. Honoré.

Bertie came to Paris at a singularly happy time. Thanks to the initiative of King Edward and the quick response of M. Delcassé and the French Government

to the British overtures, the Entente was already universally accepted and established. For Lady Bertie Paris meant a revival of memories and a renewal of old friendships formed in her youth at the Embassy with her father, Earl Cowley.

As far as diplomacy went, it was now Germany rather than France—or at least Franco-German relations—that formed the staple of the new Ambassador's preoccupations. It began in Bertie's first year, when German pressure became so strong that the French tided over a crisis by sacrificing M. Delcassé,[1] who was forced to resign the Foreign Office. Even at that early day the future conflict was glimpsed from afar, and the French grew more and more nervous. Their statesmen were keen to know precisely how far they could rely on British support, in case the worse came to the worst. The burning question was: Would France be able to count upon the assistance of England in the event of an attack upon her by Germany?[2]

At the time of the Algeciras affair M. Paul Cambon confessed that what made the issue so serious was that "the German Emperor had given the French Government to understand that they could not rely upon England, and it was very important to the French to know that they could."

While the British Foreign Minister was instructing Sir F. Bertie that "we had no obligation—none whatever—to which France could appeal, to go beyond diplomatic support," privately he was even then asking himself, "Could we stand aside complacently and see

[1] "When M. Delcassé was sacrified, —— said to me: 'Your friends the French are trembling like an aspen.'"—Lord Grey of Fallodon: *Twenty-five Years.*

[2] F.O.: Sir E. Grey to Sir F. Bertie (January 31, 1906).

France suffer for something in which we were her partner ? " This was bold doctrine for the member of a Liberal Ministry, and would have found scant sympathy in the rank and file of his Party.

Bertie quickly found that to satisfy the expectations and suspicions of the other party to the Entente was as difficult a task as his predecessors had found it to allay their hostility. In the changing French Cabinets were " doubting colleagues," who even thought England had a secret understanding with Germany ! Sir Edward Grey was disturbed at

" the levity and ease with which France assumed that we should not play the game. It was diplomatic support only that was in question now, and the very frankness with which we had explained why we could not promise in advance armed support, to which we were not pledged, might have been taken by the French as evidence that we should give the diplomatic support to which we were pledged. How could any good take root in such shifting sands of suspicion and distrust ? "

And again :

" As one looks about and sees all the perils that there were, how little belief nations have in each other, how prone they are to disbelieve and to suspect, it seems almost a miracle that the Entente survived." [1]

But amongst the doubters it appears that the new French Minister of the Interior could not be numbered.

" M. Clemenceau," reported Bertie, " with whom I have been acquainted for some time, paid me a visit late in the afternoon. He professes Anglophile tendencies,

[1] *Twenty-five Years.*

[*Photo: Elliott & Fry.*

SIR FRANCIS BERTIE, AFTERWARDS LORD BERTIE OF THAME.

(1905–1918.)

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and has in his paper, the *Aurore*, been a strong advocate of a policy of intimate relations between France and England."

At another time the Ambassador writes to the Foreign Secretary :

" On the receipt of your telegram of the 16th instant, I called on M. Bourgeois, M. Clemenceau, and M. Etienne. I told them that you had authorized me to say that cordial co-operation with France in all parts of the world is a cardinal point of British policy, and that there had never been any question on the part of His Majesty's Government of discontinuing their support of France in the questions under discussion at Algeciras.

" It is unfortunate that Frenchmen of education and position should be found ready to believe imputations against England of bad faith, but the hereditary distrust of our country, which has for so long been a characteristic of the French race, has been ably worked on by persons acting in the interests of Germany, in order to create discord between France and England."

Every act and every word uttered by the British Government had to be pondered well beforehand lest it affect the Entente. The Entente was like a delicate invalid that the slightest breeze from the east or north would upset. Once Bertie had a terrible moment when the Quai d'Orsay discovered that not only had Lord Haldane, the British War Minister, accepted an invitation to visit Germany, but that the date of his visit would coincide with the anniversary of the battle of Sedan and its annual commemoration by his hosts !

During the next five or six years Bertie had to represent the British Government during two international crises, and in 1911 came a third, that of Agadir.

The two countries, France and Germany, were glowering at one another across their respective frontiers. For some reason the German Emperor seemed to think the occasion propitious for a vigorous rattling of the sabre and that England might now safely be ignored. This time, to the great joy of France, a reminder to the contrary, issuing from the mouth of Mr. Lloyd George, perhaps the last man from whom the German Government expected it, was swiftly effective.

"I conceive," he declared at the Guildhall, "that nothing would justify a disturbance of international good will except questions of the gravest national moment. But if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievement, by allowing Britain to be treated, where her interests were vitally affected, as if she were of no account in the cabinet of nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure." [1]

France for a time professed herself satisfied with this warning to Germany, and Bertie could report an atmosphere of greater confidence and good will.

The death of King Edward in 1910 had removed a powerful influence for peace and amity between the

[1] "The speech was entirely Lloyd George's own idea. I did nothing to instigate it, but I welcomed it. The effect was much greater than any words of mine could have been. There was a section, and a considerable section, of opinion in this country that looked upon the Foreign Office in general, and myself in particular, as being unduly anti-German, just as in 1893, for instance, they looked upon Rosebery and the Foreign Office as being anti-French."—Grey of Fallodon: *Twenty-five Years.*

two countries, and both the French Press and public paid numerous tributes to his memory. During the sovereign's many visits to Paris he always accepted the hospitality of the Embassy, and relied on his Ambassador to keep him in touch with every changing form of Parisian opinion and activity and with the men of the moment.

It may be noted that his successor, King George, also paid two visits to Paris before the Great War, the last in April 1914.

All this time there had been taking place "conversations" between the French and British Military Staffs, with a view to co-operation in event of a future war—conversations arranged by the War Offices of the two countries, but so secret that even members of the British Ministry knew nothing about them. It is stranger still to learn that Sir Francis Bertie was not informed of these conferences.

It was Bertie's fate to be British Ambassador in Paris when the war broke out in which not only France but his own country, and virtually all Europe and the leading countries of the world, were involved, and to remain at the Embassy during four years of the conflict. Naturally, when the British Government made the momentous decision to range itself alongside France and against Germany, diplomacy and the customary business of the Embassy came to an end. *Inter arma silent leges.* But Bertie was still the leading British civilian resident in the French capital, and there were important functions and capacities in which he continued indispensable. It is interesting now to look into the Ambassador's mind on the eve of the conflict and see how he regarded it all.

He wrote in his *Diary* (July 30, 1914):

"Things are hanging in the balance of peace and war. We are regarded as the deciding factor. The Italians suggested that they, and we, should both stand aside. A poor bargain for the French! I have written to Grey that the feeling here is that peace between the Powers depends on England; that if she declare herself *solidaire* with France and Russia there will be no war; for Germany will not face the danger to her supplies, by sea, being cut off by the British Fleet. People, however, do not realize, or do not take into account, the difficulty for the British Government to declare England *solidaire* with Russia and France in a question such as the Austro-Serbian quarrel. The French should put pressure on the Russian Government to moderate their zeal. If we gave an assurance of armed assistance to France and Russia now, Russia would become more exacting and France would have to follow in her wake. The newspapers, but not yet the people, are becoming bellicose. The Bourse is practically closed, and the Bank of France is preparing to issue notes for 20 francs, 10 francs, and 5 francs; meanwhile strings of people at the *guichets* of the Banque de France are asking for change for banknotes. The employés are as dilatory as possible in carrying out the obligations of the Bank to give coin, whether gold or silver, in exchange for its notes."

The next day he writes:

"I am afraid that the chances of peace being maintained are diminishing. Whilst so-called amicable conversations are going on at Vienna, the Germans are getting everything ready on the French frontier for a pounce. Here everybody expects England to 'do its duty,' but the Austro-Serbian quarrel is a bad subject on which to make a declaration of solidarity with France. However, if war come and we do not join in it at the beginning, we may do ourselves, as well as the French, much injury; for we are certain to be involved in it before long, and then the French may have suffered

defeats. If, at the beginning, we were with the French, Germany would probably be starved by our Fleet ; the German Fleet would most likely stay in the Baltic, and the German mercantile marine would be wiped out. A newspaper editor says that he knows, on first-rate authority, that the King will receive a ' begging letter ' from Poincaré. What will Asquith think of that ? "

For a day or two the British Liberal Ministry hesitated, and the French began to be prepared for the worst.

" *August* 2, 1914.—It will not be long now before it is ' *Perfide Albion.*' The Germans have behaved infamously ; they have violated the territory of Luxemburg, which is under a European guarantee of neutrality ; they may next enter Belgium, which *might* excite British public opinion. The German Ambassador is still here ; possibly the German Government would like the French Government to send him his passport, so that they might say that he was turned out."

As for the British Embassy in the Faubourg St. Honoré,

" The big gates are closed, and have been for some days, as at any time the demonstrations of friendship might change into those of opprobrium."

But on August 4, like those of the Roman Temple of Janus, they were flung wide open again. England also had declared war.

At the sitting of the Chamber on that day, " when the name of England was mentioned, the deputies turned round and faced the Diplomatic Box, thinking that the British Ambassador was there."

For the next three weeks Sir Francis Bertie found himself the most popular figure in Paris. Never before had a British Ambassador enjoyed such popularity. The gratitude of the French knew no bounds. When he went abroad, women threw him kisses and strangers rushed up to clasp his hand. The courtyard of the Embassy was crowded with the carriages of the rich, famous, and powerful. Then came the retreat from Mons.

On September 1 arrived a new British hero, the great Lord Kitchener, newly appointed Minister of War. This Minister, always regarded as a civilian, now appeared in the resplendent uniform of a Field-Marshal. He had come to consult the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir John French, who hurried up from the Front, and the pair met at the Embassy. After the military conference was over French informed the Ambassador of Kitchener's intention to go down and hold an inspection of the British troops at the Front. If he carried out this intention, French threatened instantly to resign his command. That night Bertie sought Kitchener and remonstrated with him.

"As he did not seem to be convinced by my arguments I said that I would telegraph my views to His Majesty's Government. The telegram as drafted by me was worded as follows, and was addressed to Grey: 'Lord Kitchener arrived and has had a consultation with Sir John French. He tells me that it was proposed by His Majesty's Government that he should visit the British troops. I have told him that I think such a visit would have a most unfortunate effect on the French military and French public opinion; it would create the impression that Sir John French has not given satisfaction to H.M. Government, and that the British troops were to blame for the recent reverses to the French Army. . . . Lord Kitchener will leave Paris for

Havre to-morrow 6 o'clock unless he hears to the contrary.' "

The next morning Bertie received a telegram from Grey saying,

" We approve of Lord Kitchener's return as proposed."

The Ambassador notes :

" I think that Kitchener, after my interview with him and a conversation with French, felt inclined to change his mind, for he himself sent the telegram with his change of plans. So far as I was concerned he bore me no malice for having spoken my mind to him, for our personal relations were not affected by my intervention, and I saw him on several occasions after then at Paris. On his way from England to Gallipoli he was my guest at the Embassy."

Thereafter there were few incidents ; the war went on its chequered course, and virtually all business was in the hands of the military. But, although he was now seventy, Bertie hated the idea of not being in the thick of things, of not " serving in France."

On December 6 the following letter reached him from Sir Edward Grey :

" My dear Bertie :

" What is your own wish as to the Embassy ? I hope you will stay on and see the war through. I fear it cannot be agreeable while the war lasts and the French Government are away from Paris, but it would be a pity and also a loss to the public service if you did not return to Paris when the war is successfully advanced and be there to participate in its successful conclusion.

"That is very sincerely my own wish, if it is also agreeable to you."

It was highly agreeable to Bertie, as was later the peerage which was conferred upon him, although he, too, like his predecessor Monson, was the son of a peer.

The life of the aged Ambassador soon became as cloistered as Lord Lyons' had been, only in Bertie's case there was nothing to do and sometimes time hung heavily on his hands. He sat or strolled about the beautiful Embassy garden, wondering what was really going on in all this busy bellicose world—a world from which he as a civilian was carefully excluded, a world clad in uniform which set up a dozen offices all over Paris for the transaction of His Britannic Majesty's affairs, and had its secretaries and aides-de-camp and adjutants and liaison officers, whose chiefs, when they visited the Embassy, came not to see him but the Military Attaché—a personage, alas! who had been foisted upon him and with whom he was wholly out of sympathy. If the British Government had only let him participate in the direction of the war! And all this foolish talk of peace and American co-operation and a League of Nations after the war!

"If the French armies at the Front drove away the Germans a Corps d'Armée might march back on Paris and suppress the present lot of authorities. Nobody would be any the worse, and the public and the country would be all the better for a change of administration. We should not hear so much rubbish about the Society of Nations and everlasting peace as now. The phrase, having been started by the Socialists and President Wilson, nobody in an important political position ventures to ridicule the 'Society of Nations.'

"Who would undertake to maintain peace if there

were a difference of opinion between any two or more of the nations belonging to the Society and the disputing nations who were prepared to fight it out?"

That, in the astute Ambassador's opinion, was the weak point. A League of Nations was utterly impracticable. And then the Americans—but here His Excellency's indignation got the better of his diplomatic suavity:

"They are a rotten lot of psalm-singing, profit-mongering humbugs," he wrote. "The present conduct of the American Government is disgusting. For electoral purposes the President is trying to twist the lion's tail. If that animal showed his teeth the President would collapse. The French Government and Press ought to firmly declare solidarity with us in the questions of blockade, seizure of mails, treatment of German submarines, whether combatant or so-called commercial ones. The Americans have forgotten the *Lusitania*, the *Persia*, and they are not wasting any crocodile's tears over the judicial murder of Captain Fryatt."

And at another time:

"I hope that we shall be very firm with our American cousins. They don't mean fighting. They prefer making vast sums of money individually and doing a roaring trade with us. If we show hesitation in regard to the new American retaliatory law we shall encourage the President to do some electoral bluff; and he may take some step, relying on our giving way, which it would be difficult for him to retrace, and *we* cannot give way about the blockade."

Holding such strong, uncompromising views, what might he not have accomplished had he himself been

Foreign Secretary! For, as Bertie records, a clever Irishman, Dr. Dillon, had come to the Embassy and during luncheon had expressed his regret that His Excellency had not succeeded Sir Edward Grey.

He modestly deprecated such an idea, but he declares:

"I found that he was serious, and he would have it that the question had been seriously discussed in London. I said that I had no knowledge of it, and that it was an impossible notion, for I had no parliamentary experience and no power of speech. He said that speaking was not necessary—acting and not speech-making was what was required. Somebody else might speak. He laughed at my further plea that seventy-two was not an age at which to make a new start!"

That such an idea should have been entertained at all was significant. Meanwhile, the Ambassador gave his little luncheon-parties to stray people from England—people who could tell him nothing of what he really longed to know, unimportant people who dealt in rumours and *canards* and tittle-tattle. When really important personages came, such for example as Colonel House, they rudely never came near the Embassy, or, if they met the Ambassador elsewhere, had nothing to say to him. Once in one of his lonely walks he met an interesting female acquaintance of long ago, and carried her off to the Embassy.

"I met in the Rue de Rivoli Madame Gueydeau, Caillaux's first wife. She came to luncheon with me: I had not seen her to speak to for over a year: she is an interesting woman, and was very handsome—born in Louisiana of French parents. She thinks that there will be a great change in France after a successful war."

THE BRITISH EMBASSY, PARIS, TO-DAY.
From the Courtyard.

[*Photo: F. Contet.*

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The days passed into weeks, and the weeks into months, and the changing season still saw the Ambassador leading his uneventful existence, generally in his garden. "The garden is so green," he notes in the spring, "and the lilacs are out, and the laburnum." And in October:

"The autumn tints in the garden have been glorious. Chestnut-trees red-brown, pale brown and yellow, and alongside the bright green of a second crop of leaves on some limes. The acacias still green, and the sycamores green and brown. Yesterday's wind has brought many leaves to the ground, and the chestnut nearest the house, which is the earliest to come into leaf, is now nearly bare."

But the Ambassador could show spirit upon occasion. His way of dealing with distinguished French journalists rather astonished Mr. Lloyd George during one of his visits to Paris. He had asked the editor of *Le Matin* to breakfast with him, but just before the meal Lord Bertie dropped into the Hôtel Crillon to have a chat. The editor was announced. "Oh, let him wait!" said the Ambassador. "But it is the editor of *Le Matin*!" cried Lloyd George. "Don't you know him?" "No, nor do I want to know him!" The Prime Minister was considerably taken aback at such negligence in an Ambassador, but said, "It's all very well for you—you are not a politician." As for the editor, "He entered the room as I left it," records Lord Bertie. "I had my coffee, and was not tempted to remain and make his acquaintance."

No wonder the Prime Minister, on his return to England, at his next interview with the King, suggested

that it would be desirable to make a change at the Embassy in Paris !

While gossip was busy with the topic of Lord Bertie's successor, Bertie himself crossed over to London and was cordially received by His Majesty. M. Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador, had spoken to the King—he had heard from his brother Jules that the French did not want a change in Paris.

" He said that I was the best-informed Ambassador that had ever been there," notes Bertie complacently. " I understood the French and held my own in defending British interests—I frequently informed Jules Cambon of French politics behind the scenes of which he [Cambon] had not before been aware and found afterwards to be correct ; I might rely on His Majesty to do his best to put a stop to Lloyd George's suggestion. Nothing could be nicer and kinder than the King's attitude towards me."

So, in spite of the Prime Minister, in spite even of the redoubtable Lord Northcliffe, Bertie stayed on.[1]

But in winter-time it was not very pleasant, especially when his staff was laid up and coals were costly and hard to get.[2]

[1] Later, General Trenchard, on a visit to the Embassy, told him how he had lately met Lord Northcliffe at luncheon and had lost his temper and let him have it, Lord Northcliffe having told him that he had got the General appointed to the Aviation business, and that he [Lord N.] knew the spirit of the Army better than the General ; the General told him that his scurrilous newspapers had done irretrievable harm by their attacks on military and naval officers and public men.—*Diary*.

[2] Under date of February 4, 1917, the Ambassador writes : " Our sick list is : Phipps, measles ; Addison, bronchitis ; Palairet, recovering from influenza, but still laid up. The cold is arctic ; coals almost impossible to obtain ; 200, 250, and 275 francs per ton are being paid. The State Railways are supplying me at less figures, but only in small

ANTI-BRITISH REACTION

Living in the seclusion of the Embassy, and conversing only with amiably inclined Ministers and passing travellers, Lord Bertie was hardly aware of the anti-British reaction which took place in Paris and other towns and in many quarters of the French Army in the spring of 1917.[1] It was during this time that *défaitisme* and Bolo-ism were rampant, when Socialist orators were charging England with being the real cause of the prolongation of the war, and mobs of men and women shouting "*A bas l'Angleterre!*" were broken up by the police. It was at this unpropitious moment that the united bands of the Guards' Division visited Paris, and were to have marched from the Etoile down the Champs-Elysées and along the Boulevards. There was a hurried conference at the Hôtel de Ville, and the Prefect of Police put a sudden stop to the proceedings. Some excuse had to be made to the British Ambassador. He was told that the Guardsmen were too popular—they would send the Paris crowd into such a frenzy of delight

"that by the end of the march the gentlemen in scarlet

quantities; cartage of it is 15 francs per ton. I have had to close the kitchen, and cooking is done in the still-room."—*Ibid.*

[1] Sometimes Bertie's characteristic manner was very effective. Mr. Wickham Steed tells us that French public opinion at this time had become restive and "was inclined to be critical." The belief was firmly held in some quarters that England intended, after the war, to retain possession of Calais, where she had already firmly established herself. M. Hanotaux, the ex-Foreign Minister and an inveterate Anglophobe, had been invited by a Parisian hostess to meet the British Ambassador at her dinner-table. By way of opening the conversation Hanotaux tactfully remarked, "Many people, M. l'Ambassadeur, think that the British establishments in the North look remarkably permanent."

"They are quite right," answered Bertie promptly; "when we were last there we stayed the devil of a time!"

and gold-lace would not have a rag to their backs. The women of Paris would cut off everything as souvenirs, even to their trouser buttons."

And Lord Bertie complacently accepted the assurance.

A day or two later the Guards' band played at the Trocadéro, while a huge force of police was on the alert outside. Bertie invited them all, together with the band of the Garde Républicaine, to a big tea-party at the Embassy afterwards. He thus writes in all innocence in his *Diary* :

"*May* 25, 1917.—The Guards' band arrived here at 6.45 instead of at 5.30 p.m., the Trocadéro performance having been delayed for three-quarters of an hour by Chenal not arriving at her appointed time to sing the *Marseillaise.* The Garde Républicaine band did not come to the *thé. The Ministry for War omitted to tell them that they were invited.* We had 300 big bottles of Bass, but the musicians had not time to drink more than 118 bottles. The weather was splendid, and I went down to entertain the guests. The French officer interpreter told me that it was Malvy who made objection to the march through the streets of Paris, *as it might cause a demonstration, I suppose, of a pro-British character.* The musicians had to hurry away to their dinner before going to the opera."

But now Lord Bertie's days—and nights—at the Embassy were numbered. The air raids and the bombardments of March 1918 were a little too much for the aged diplomat's nerves. He had been accustomed to sit in "Pauline's Boudoir" and read his letters and newspapers; but the Embassy architect came and told him that "it was very unwise of me to remain in my sitting-room when a raid was on, for, besides the risk of a bomb

falling on the roof of the ballroom, there was open space enough for an aerial torpedo to come in through the window."

"When, therefore, the 'Alerte' sounded last night just after dinner, I went, as did the rest of the household, to the cellars. The raid lasted nearly three hours. After the departure of the Messenger to London I was joined by Monson.[1] As in the previous raid the reports of aircraft guns were sometimes apparently near, and at other times far away. There were interludes of no reports. The sound of exploding bombs was quite different. We heard three violent ones. The vibration threw open the *porte-cochère* of the next-door house. About thirty bombs fell in and about Paris—one near the German Embassy, one near the Luxembourg, another in the Place de la République, one near the Pasteur Institute, one beyond the Trocadéro, one near Père Lachaise, two at Sèvres, two near the Gare de Lyon, some in the north of Paris."

When someone told him that the Germans were really aiming at the adjacent Elysée, Bertie repeated the *mot* which had so enchanted President Poincaré when he had first heard of it, "*Pourvu qu'ils visent bien!*" Bertie was rather enchanted with it himself.

On the night of March 2 the Ambassador and his household again took to these cellars, and in the morning he notes:

"I finished dressing and had my coffee in the small cellar, where I afterwards read the newspapers. There were from time to time explosions. The raid dwindled and people resumed their ordinary ways. Last night some bombs were dropped in the neighbourhood. This morning they were thrown by a Gotha—said to be so

[1] The son of his predecessor and a member of the Embassy Staff.

high up as to be unreachable—on several spots, Bd. Rochechouart, Gare de l'Est, Luxembourg, and Tuileries Gardens."

"*March* 24, 1918.—The evening papers announce officially that yesterday's bombardment was by a long-range gun. The distance is reckoned at from 65 to 75 miles from Paris. At 8.30 last night, just as I had finished dinner, an 'Alerte' was sounded. We took to the cellars and I read there until 10 p.m., when the church bells rang 'All clear.' The raiding machines do not seem to have reached Paris, for there was no firing or bombing. I was called at 7.15 this morning, half an hour earlier than usual, for an 'Alerte' was announced: there were detonations every twenty minutes or half-hour until noon. As I was crossing the Place de la Concorde I heard a shell burst."

It was the last straw. Lord Bertie felt it was time to go home. He therefore sent in his resignation to the Foreign Office, packed up his belongings, and bade the Embassy a final adieu. He had stuck it out doggedly for four years, and now, with the new German offensive beginning in the North, the war threatened to go on for at least another year. His friends regretted him: his trim, erect figure, his tightly-buttoned frock-coat, his ruddy face and light-blue eyes, in which was occasionally a gleam of wistfulness, would be missed by those who were accustomed to regard Bertie as John Bull incarnate.

Moreover, when he departed there vanished also (as was pleasantly chronicled at the time) the last top-hat left in war-time Paris!

CHAPTER XIX

CONCLUSION

AT the crisis which the war had now reached, in the spring of 1918, there came a reconstruction of the British Cabinet. Lord Milner replaced Lord Derby as War Minister. The Embassy in Paris had become by this time largely symbolic; but, in the existing posture of affairs and by the establishment of a single Allied military command under the French Marshal Foch, there was need to hold fast to that symbol of international relations.

It was explained to Lord Derby that his going to Paris would inspire confidence; that his mere presence in the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré, even though he were to be silent and inactive; his mental sanity, his physical solidity, his wealth and ancient lineage, and the fact that he had been recently Secretary of State for War, must serve to fortify the practical working bond between the two peoples at large.

Edward George Villiers Stanley, the 17th Earl of Derby, is a bluff, good-natured nobleman, and, although he hardly relished the idea of a prolonged expatriation, on April 18 he accepted the post. Moreover, as Mr. Lloyd George pointed out to him, the tide was now surely on the turn, and he need only remain at the Embassy until the crowning victory and the conclusion of a Treaty of Peace.

The appointment of this " new kind of Ambassador," as Derby described himself, enjoyed, as had been foreseen, a " good Press " in Paris.

" The fact," observed *Le Temps*, " that the British Government has chosen Lord Derby to succeed Lord Bertie shows the capital importance which Great Britain attaches to her diplomatic representative, and is a compliment to France."

" I can assure you," declared the new Ambassador to President Poincaré on the occasion of his reception at the Elysée, " that the sentiments which in 1914 decided the participation of the British Empire in the present war are to-day as strong as at the outset, and that my sovereign's Dominions are still animated by the same inflexible will to spare no efforts to secure that victory which shall give us lasting peace.

" I am new," he went on to say, " to this work of diplomacy. I venture to hope, however, that, in spite of this, perhaps because of it, I shall be able to rely the more fully on your generous assistance and that of the Government of the Republic in order to achieve the purpose which I have at heart."

In his reply the President declared once more that the war had " sealed for ever the friendship of the two nations, with common ideals and a single cause."

Writing on the subject of Ambassadors to France, Lord Grey of Fallodon has observed that :

" All nations and Governments are apt to be sensitive and suspicious of each other ; France is no exception to this rule. Paris is apt to be sensitive, and quick to suspect, perhaps even more so than most of the other capitals. It is therefore not easy for a foreign diplomatist in Paris to inspire confidence ; but if he does inspire confidence he comes in course of time to be really trusted,

THE EARL OF DERBY. [*Photo: Russell.*
Ambassador, 1918–1920.

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and the trust given him is ungrudging and whole-hearted."

Such trust, in Lord Grey's opinion, had been accorded to Lord Bertie: it was now given to his successor precisely because he was not viewed as a professional diplomatist.

Derby was "new to diplomacy," but had he been as shrewd a master of the art as the best of his predecessors there would still have been little for him to do. As far as consultations with the Minister at the Quai d'Orsay, the preparation of dispatches to the Foreign Office, the close observation of the comments upon current and political events and opinions were concerned, all such labour would have been supererogatory. It was futile as long as the war lasted, and indeed for some time afterwards.

In effect, with the changed conditions in the two countries—not so much in their mutual relations, for these will never fundamentally alter, but the manner in which all Governments are informed and public opinion is created and controlled—the Ambassador is now, on one side of his office, something of an anachronism. His larger powers and functions have been encroached upon by the Council of the League of Nations. Yet, even so, the Embassy might easily become, not a less, but a greater power for good.

The sort of disaster which overtook successive British Ambassadors to another Republic, to mention Lord Sackville and Sir Mortimer Durand, even Cecil Spring-Rice's difficulties—and, on the other hand, the great success which attended the embassies of men of a different character and training, Lord Bryce, Lord Reading, and Lord Balfour at Washington—should have

revealed to the Foreign Office that the French Republic, the French people, and Franco-British relations are exceptional, and that Paris is, in other than the official hierarchic sense, an exceptional place.

Long ago, as far back as Lord Dufferin's time, *The Times* remarked :

" There is one point which does not seem to have been invariably grasped by our Ambassadors in Paris since the establishment of the Republic. An Ambassador always does his work better if he is really and fully in touch with the society of the capital to which he is accredited. It is no secret that there have been deficiencies in this respect at the British Embassy in Paris. Sometimes a British Ambassador and his family have seen practically no society at all ; but more commonly they have frequented that section of the world which belongs to the Faubourg St. Germain, just as their predecessors did two or three generations ago. Doubtless it is pleasanter, if you are yourself of aristocratic birth and education, to consort chiefly with people of like traditions ; and in France everybody knows many of the members of that world have a distinction and a charm not to be found elsewhere. But, none the less, this is not the society which represents the classes that now rule France."

In the days of Horace Walpole he and his friends were as much at home in Paris as in London. In their drawing-rooms were found scholars, politicians, authors, painters, actors, and actresses—people of talent and wit as well as of *le haut monde.*

" A British Ambassador should set himself to revive a state of things which, as far as it went, was productive of nothing but good."

To-day, under the regime of a man in the prime of life, a man of the world, fond of hospitality, one

conceives the Embassy as a centre and rallying-place for the best, brightest, and most representative people of all sections of Anglo-French society. A visit to one of the weekly parties at the Embassy would ensure meeting the most distinguished English men and women resident in or passing through the French capital. If the official presence of the Ambassador and his witty or eloquent utterances were considered as essential to the success of a public function, as those of the American Ambassador are regarded in London, it would be a great step forward to British national popularity in Paris, and the removal of prejudice.

But whatever the popularity the English enjoy in France, whether under Kingdom, Empire, or Republic, and no matter how amiable or persuasive their official representative, such popularity must always, it would seem, be fluctuating and precarious. *Ententes* may come and go. Wars may be fought shoulder to shoulder, hands may be fervently clasped and loving toasts exchanged, but the national diversity of character will ever create or foster recurrent antagonisms. At the same time, we should not forget what a former Ambassador once ingeniously propounded—every part of an interrelated machine may be antagonistic and be striving to fly off at a tangent, and yet the whole mechanism, well clamped, well oiled, and under control, will still work efficiently and harmoniously.

It was the same Ambassador (Lord Dufferin) who also said: "The population of France diminishes, but as long as there remains one single Frenchman he will spread himself from the Rhine to the Pyrenees and make trouble for us." And doubtless there are French diplomatists who feel the same about England.

Whatever Lord Derby might have achieved in a

happier period, he had little opportunity to do during the two years of his embassy, save during the spring and summer of 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles was being negotiated and Paris was crowded with distinguished visitors, most of whom were at one time or another entertained at the Embassy. Long before he went home for good in the following summer, he had lost any illusions he may have had as to any enduring unity of political views between the two countries as a result of the war. One of his French guests had wittily remarked, "*Le Traité de Paix a tous les germes d'une guerre juste et durable.*"

But both he and his immediate successor, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, a trained and polished diplomat, who took over the Embassy (November 27, 1920) for an even briefer period, were spared the flagrant divergence of policy which took place when the Ruhr was invaded by order of the French Government in January 1923.

The American General Henry T. Allen, who commanded the Army of Occupation at Coblenz, visiting Paris in the early spring of 1922, records in his *Journal* (March 28):

"At six o'clock I went to call on Lord Hardinge by appointment. He always seems to be lonesome in that tremendous Embassy, furnished in such a sumptuous fashion, and I might add in marked contrast to the beautifully furnished but relatively small establishment of our Ambassador.

"The attitude of the French was keenly on Lord Hardinge's mind, and I was much interested to hear to what length he would go in talking of their present policies. He spoke of Lord Derby's efforts to bring about a treaty with France, which he opposed because of the danger to which French Chauvinism might lead —as, for example, marching into Frankfurt and the

[*Photo: Elliott & Fry.*

LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST.

(1920–1922.)

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bare failure to go into the Ruhr. England, like the United States, wants to see Germany restored that we may profit by the good market, but France wants Germany kept down. When Lloyd George came up from the Riviera, he telegraphed Hardinge to come to the station; thence he came to this house, where Poincaré met him."

Towards the close of the same year (December 14) the General was himself visited by Lord Derby, then again Secretary for War, of whom he writes:

"Though a well-known Francophile and advocate of even more than a Franco-English understanding, he does not favour Poincaré's present attitude.

"Lord Derby remarked that the chances of England and France reaching an agreement are about as ten to one."

In Lord Bertie's *Diary*, under date of January 8, 1917, he makes an amusing entry in the manner of Pepys with reference to His Excellency Robert Offley Crewe-Milnes, first Marquess of Crewe, who even at that time was spoken of as his successor:

"Between five and six of the clock this afternoon there comes the Countess Murat, daughter of a city man, Bianchi, who dealt in stocks, much put about to ascertain what truth there might be in a certain rumour reported to a Paris journal, the *Echo*, and taken from two of the London news reports, viz. the *Observer* and the *Weekly Dispatch*, that the King's Ambassador is to be recalled, and another, of political and parliamentary experience, of culture and tact, and particularly with humour, and a literary man, viz. Crewe (Marquess), be substituted for him, the said Marquess having all the qualities to recommend him to the French people, for though a great noble yet democratic in his views, and his rare humour, of which the French are so appreciative,

would render him irresistible to them. The Countess had been at the house of the Princess of Poix, there partaking of what the people of France, or more particularly the ladies of fashion, called a ' taste,' namely, tea or chocolate with cakes, pastries, and such-like trifles. She had imparted to the Princess her intention to present her respects to the Ambassador's good lady, she being, so she heard, minded to sojourn for a time, and that soon, at a health resort in the South, which hearing, the Princess advised the Countess not to delay, for the Ambassador was to be recalled by his Government, so she had learnt by a newspaper. The Countess, after recounting all this and much more rumoured about, was greatly comforted to learn that nothing was known here of such intention on the part of the King of England or of His Majesty's Lord Treasurer. This she will make known and widely, for she goes much about in the Capital, is given to prattle, and knows many in all ranks of the good people of Paris ! And now also *à la mode de Pepys*—not at all troubled by all this talk—to bed." [1]

But the Marquess of Crewe's appointment had to wait until November 18, 1922.

His Excellency did not arrive at the Embassy until three days after Christmas, and a fortnight before France's separate action in the Ruhr. Precisely what official part he took in the warnings, advice, and official protests which were addressed by the British to the French Government over this unhappy business and in other questions whose discussion involved skill, tact, and forbearance, it is too soon to recount in these pages. It may be noted, however, that in recent years it has become more and more the practice, when important

[1] " Lord Lytton is no longer first favourite for the Paris Embassy when Derby leaves. Austen Chamberlain and Crewe are in the running. I think that Crewe would be most suitable, and Lady Crewe would make for herself a great position."—BERTIE : *Diary*, January, 1919.

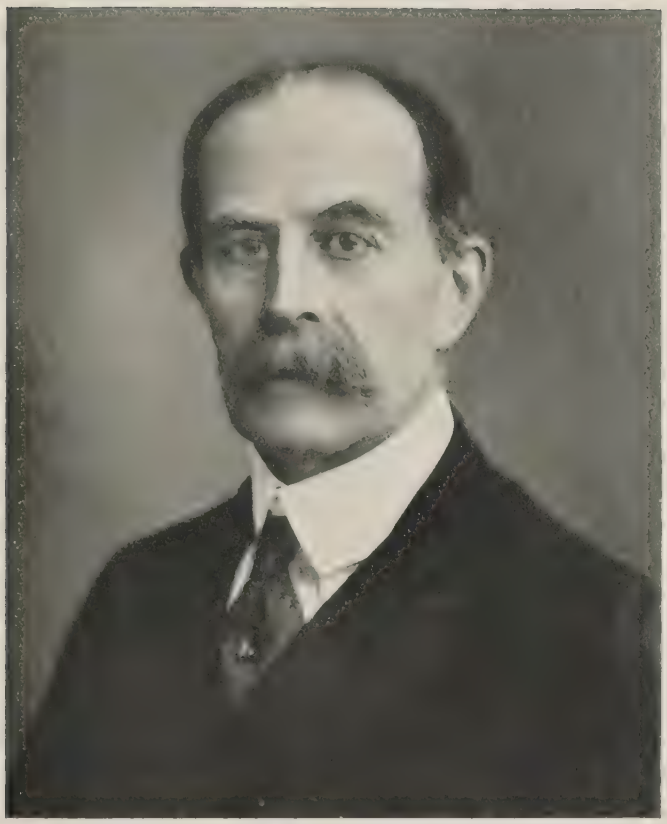

Photo: Russell.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE MARQUESS OF CREWE.

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matters are to be negotiated, to entrust the negotiations to the Ministers directly concerned, over the heads of the Ambassadors. Thus, to-day a trip to Paris or London has come to be an ordinary incident in the official life of a Prime Minister or Foreign Minister, and even of a Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It may be said that the encomium which the late Lord Bertie so pleasantly, and withal so ingeniously, passed upon his successor and his gracious consort at the Embassy,[1] became abundantly verified, and that Lord and Lady Crewe won the respect and esteem of Parisian society and of the Government to which the Ambassador was accredited.

Time was when the Embassy in Paris and the parcel of ground upon which it stands was the only spot in all this fair land of France belonging to England, the sole quarter where an Englishman could take sanctuary and could call his very own.

Since the Great War this is true no longer. There are other spots and sanctuaries—few in number, but densely peopled—whose soil is vested in the English Motherland. These are the cemeteries where lie the English dead, who believed—let us respect their illusion! —that they fought in the cause of France, whose great danger they certainly helped to avert, and whose wrongs they gave their lives to right. Should not, to-day, these Englishmen in France, though silent, be themselves the most eloquent ambassadors in the cause of peace and good will between the two peoples?—alike yet so strongly unlike, equally responsive to appeals to sentiment, but

[1] Lady Crewe, the Ambassador's second wife, was formerly Lady Peggy Primrose, the daughter of the Earl of Rosebery. Her mother was a Rothschild.

happily also to appeals to common sense and common interest.

England and France owe much to one another which neither would have achieved singly, and the treasures of the heart and intellect, the imagination and the arts of life, with which each has endowed the other, far outweigh the accumulated animosities of centuries.

"Monsieur Michelot," wrote the Princess Pauline (January 14, 1813) to her man of affairs :

"Je viens de reflechir qu'à mon rétour de Paris, je ne veux plus que mes bijoux soient dans différentes commodes : mon intention est de les réunir dans un meuble qui ne quittera jamais ma chambre. . . . Il faut que ce meuble soit analogue à la beauté de l'appartement et qu'il puisse contenir tous mes bijoux."

And so, with these words, in which the reader may discover a not infelicitous allegory, we take leave of *le nid de Pauline* and its ambassadorial memories of more than a century.

APPENDIX

British Ambassadors in Paris from 1761 to 1814

1761. Hans Stanley (afterwards Right Hon. Hans Stanley), Chargé d'Affaires.

1762. John Russell, Duke of Bedford. (September 4.)

1763. Francis Seymour, Earl of Hertford.

1765. Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond.

1766. William Henry Nassau, Earl of Rochford. (July 2.)

1768. Simon Harcourt, Earl Harcourt.

1772. David Murray, Viscount Stormont (afterwards Earl of Mansfield. (September 9.)

1783. Francis Godolphin-Osborne, Marquess of Carmarthen. (February 10.)

,, George Montague, Duke of Manchester. (April 9.)

,, John Frederick Sackville, Duke of Dorset.

1784. Daniel Hailes, Minister Plenipotentiary *ad int.* (April 28.)

1785. William Eden (afterwards Lord Auckland), Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary for Commercial Affairs. (December 9.)

1790. George Granville, Earl Gower. (June 11; recalled September 1792.)

1796. James Harris (afterwards Earl of Malmesbury), Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary for negotiating a Treaty of Peace. (October 29.)

1797. James Harris, Lord Malmesbury, for negotiating a Peace with the French Plenipotentiaries of the French Republic at Lille. (June 30.)

1801. Charles Cornwallis, Marquess Cornwallis, Plenipotentiary at the Congress of Amiens. (October 29.)

1801. Francis James Jackson, Minister Plenipotentiary. (December 2.)

1802. Anthony Merry, Minister Plenipotentiary. (April 1.)

,, Charles, Lord (afterwards Earl) Whitworth. (September 10; left Paris May 19, 1803.)

1806. Francis Seymour, Earl of Yarmouth, and James Maitland, Earl of Lauderdale, Commissioners for negotiating a Peace with France. (August 1.)

1814. Sir Charles Stuart, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary *ad int.* (June 4.)

,, Charles Bagot, Minister Plenipotentiary. (July 11.)

,, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington. (August 8.)

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